Compassion in Conflict: Following Jesus in the Israel-Gaza Crisis

Mohammad Mandurah

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In the Name of Allah,
The Most Merciful,
The Most Compassionate

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Preface: A Personal Journey to This Crisis

The conflict between Israel and Gaza has become one of the defining moral and humanitarian challenges of our time. Every day, headlines recount stories of loss, displacement, and unimaginable suffering—stories that echo across borders, faiths, and political divides. As someone who stands outside the Christian tradition, I have watched these events unfold with a sense of both heartbreak and deep curiosity. What does it truly mean to respond to such suffering—not simply as a distant observer, but as someone who seeks to understand the ethical and spiritual imperatives at the core of Christianity?

This book is the fruit of a personal journey. It began with questions: How do the teachings of Jesus speak to the realities of conflict and pain today? Can ancient calls to love, mercy, and justice guide us through the complexities of modern geopolitics? My search led me into Scripture, into conversations with believers, and into the testimonies of those living in the shadow of war. I encountered a faith that is not merely a matter of doctrine or ritual, but a living call to action—a call that pierces through division and invites us to see every person as a neighbor, every moment as an opportunity for compassion.

I write not to reinterpret Christian doctrine or to offer easy answers. Rather, my hope is to invite reflection, honest wrestling, and practical engagement with the teachings of Jesus. This book aims to serve as a bridge—connecting theological conviction with lived compassion, and offering practical steps for mercy, even when the way forward is fraught with difficulty and disagreement.

May these reflections inspire you to look beyond the headlines, to listen to the cries of those in pain, and to embody a compassion that reflects the heart of Jesus—one that refuses to turn away, even when the path is costly. In a world marked by division and despair, may we find the courage to walk together toward mercy, justice, and reconciliation.

Dr. Mohammad M. Mandurah

Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

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Introduction:

The teachings of Jesus of Nazareth stand as a radical challenge to the divisions and injustices of every age. His call to love one's neighbor, to care for the suffering, and to seek justice for the oppressed resonates with particular urgency in the context of the Israel-Gaza crisis—a crisis marked by starvation, displacement, and loss on a scale that demands both moral clarity and compassionate action.

This book begins with a simple but pressing question: What does it mean to follow Jesus in a time of conflict? How do His words and example guide us through the complexities of modern geopolitics, deep-seated theological convictions, and the daily realities of human suffering? Drawing on Scripture, current reports, and the voices of Christian leaders, each chapter seeks to illuminate a path that honors both the depth of faith and the demands of mercy.

Overview of the contents of the book:

Chapter 1: Loving Your Neighbor – Who Is My Neighbor Today?

We explore Jesus's foundational command to love our neighbor, reexamining who qualifies as a neighbor in the midst of conflict. Through the parable of the Good Samaritan and other teachings, we challenge the boundaries that often limit compassion, asking what it means to see Palestinians in Gaza as neighbors deserving mercy.

Chapter 2: "I Was Hungry" – Jesus's Call to Action

This chapter delves into the direct, urgent commands of Jesus to feed the hungry and care for the oppressed. We reflect on Matthew 25 and consider how tangible acts of mercy—feeding, healing, welcoming—are not optional but central to authentic discipleship.

Chapter 3: The Reality in Gaza – Seeing the Suffering

We confront the humanitarian catastrophe in Gaza, moving beyond statistics to the personal stories of those affected. Drawing on recent reports and survivor testimonies, we challenge readers to see the suffering with open eyes and hearts, refusing to turn away from discomfort.

Chapter 4: Israel in Prophecy – Seeking Jesus's True Teachings Amidst Theological Divide

This chapter examines the theological frameworks—particularly Dispensationalism and mainstream Christian traditions—that shape attitudes toward Israel and Gaza. We analyze how these beliefs influence responses to suffering and ask whether theological support for Israel can coexist with urgent compassion for Palestinians.

Chapter 5: Betraying Compassion – US Support for Israel and the Neglect of Jesus's Teachings

We assess the ethical and spiritual implications of US military, economic, and political support for Israel, especially as it relates to the crisis in Gaza. Drawing on statements from Christian leaders and humanitarian data, we consider how complicity in policies that perpetuate suffering stands in tension with the gospel's call to justice and mercy.

Chapter 6: Prophecy and Presence – Living in the "Already and Not Yet"

Here, we reflect on the balance between future hope and present responsibility. We explore how anticipation of Christ's return should empower, not paralyze, immediate ethical action, and how living in the "already and not yet" of God's kingdom calls us to urgent compassion.

Chapter 7: What Would Jesus Do in Gaza?

This chapter offers an imaginative, soul-searching reflection on how Jesus might respond to Gaza's suffering today. Through vivid scenarios and scriptural examples, we challenge readers to embody Christ's compassion—feeding, healing, defending, and loving without limits.

Chapter 8: Steps of Mercy – How We Can Respond

Moving from reflection to action, we outline practical steps for Christians: supporting humanitarian organizations, praying for peace, advocating for policy change, and educating communities. These actions are presented as ways to honor both theological convictions and the immediate needs of Gaza.

Chapter 9: Building Bridges – Dialogue Within Our Communities

We emphasize the power of community in shaping beliefs and actions. This chapter offers tools for dialogue, Bible study guides, and inspiration from Christian leaders to help faith communities engage constructively with the Israel-Gaza crisis, fostering collective compassion.

Chapter 10: Conclusion – A Call to Be Salt and Light

The book closes with an urgent plea to act as "salt and light" in the world, reflecting Jesus's justice and mercy in response to Gaza's suffering. We offer a blessing and encouragement to be peacemakers and justice-bearers, united in Christ's mission.

The Appendices

Key Scriptures, voices of Christian leaders, and trusted humanitarian organizations are provided for further study and engagement.

Whether you approach this book with strong convictions, deep questions, or a desire for practical guidance, my hope is that you will find here an invitation: to see the suffering in Gaza not as a distant tragedy, but as a neighbor's cry; to wrestle honestly with the tension between prophecy and presence; and to act with a compassion that mirrors the heart of Jesus.

Let us begin this journey together, seeking to embody a faith that is both courageous in hope and urgent in love—a faith that refuses to turn away from suffering, even when the path is difficult.

Chapter 1: Loving Your Neighbor – Who Is My Neighbor Today?

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:39)

1.1 Introduction: A Call to Love in a Fractured World

As someone who stands outside the Christian faith, I find myself continually drawn to the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, whose words seem to pierce through the noise of human division with a clear, transformative call to love. Through reading your Scriptures and engaging in conversations with believers, I've come to see that this call isn't just a gentle encouragement—it appears to be the very foundation of what it means to follow Him. In a world so often torn apart by borders, conflicting beliefs, and deep-seated histories of strife, Jesus's message feels like a radical invitation to look beyond our own circles and see others, even those we might consider distant or different, with profound compassion. Today, as we bear witness to the immense suffering in Gaza, where families endure starvation and loss on a scale described in 2025 reports as both deliberate and catastrophic, I find myself wrestling with a pressing question: What do Jesus's teachings on love mean for us right now? Who, according to His words, is our neighbor when cries of hunger and despair echo from a place so entangled in political and theological tension?

This chapter seeks to explore the heart of Jesus's teachings on love and neighborliness, reflecting on how they might speak to the crisis unfolding in Gaza. I write as an outsider, not to dictate or reinterpret your faith, but to marvel at the power of Jesus's words and to invite you to consider their implications alongside me. My hope is that by grounding ourselves in His teachings, as recorded in your Scriptures, we can begin to see a path forward—one that honors the depth of His compassion in the face of modern-day suffering.

1.2 The Greatest Commandment: Love Without Limits

I've been struck by a passage in your Scriptures that seems to capture the essence of Jesus's mission and message. In the Gospel of Matthew, specifically Matthew 22:37-39, Jesus is asked about the greatest commandment in the Law. His response, as I've read, is both simple and profound: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: Love your neighbor as yourself." As I reflect on these words, I'm moved by how Jesus links love for God directly to

love for others, as if the two cannot be separated. There's no fine print here, no list of exceptions or conditions about who qualifies as a neighbor. It's a command that feels both beautifully straightforward and incredibly challenging—a call to love all people with the same care and concern we naturally reserve for ourselves.

For those of you who follow Jesus, this teaching, as I understand it, must be the lens through which you view the world. If loving God means loving others without limits, then this command shapes how we respond to every person, no matter their background or circumstances. It compels us to consider even those in far-off places like Gaza, where suffering is acute and well-documented in 2025 reports. If Jesus's words are to be taken seriously—and I believe many of you would say they must be—then love cannot stop at the edges of familiarity or comfort. It must reach into places of pain, even when the context is as complex and charged as the Israel-Gaza conflict. This teaching sets the stage for a deeper question: Who, exactly, does Jesus mean when He speaks of a "neighbor"?

1.3 The Parable of the Good Samaritan: Redefining Neighborliness

To answer this question, I turned to another passage in your Scriptures that has left a deep impression on me. In Luke 10:25-37, a religious expert challenges Jesus, asking how to inherit eternal life. After affirming the command to love God and neighbor, the expert presses further: "And who is my neighbor?" Rather than offering a neat definition, Jesus tells a story—a parable about a man traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho who is attacked by robbers, beaten, and left half-dead by the roadside. Two religious figures, a priest and a Levite, see the man but pass by on the other side, perhaps constrained by ritual purity laws, fear, or indifference. Then comes a Samaritan, a member of a group historically despised by Jews, who stops, binds the man's wounds, pours oil and wine on them, and takes him to an inn, paying for his care out of his own pocket. Jesus concludes by asking, "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert answers, "The one who had mercy on him." And Jesus replies, "Go and do likewise."

This story, as I've pondered it, feels revolutionary. The Samaritan wasn't a friend, a fellow believer, or even someone from the same ethnic or religious community as the injured man. He was an outsider, likely viewed with suspicion or outright hostility. Yet Jesus holds him up as the true neighbor—not because of shared identity or proximity, but because of his act of mercy. Neighborliness, in Jesus's teaching, isn't defined by who someone is but by what they need and how we respond. It's a radical redefinition, one that prioritizes compassion over every barrier—cultural, religious, or historical. The Samaritan's actions seem to echo Jesus's broader call to love without limits, showing that a neighbor is anyone whose suffering calls us to act.

1.4 Drawing Parallels: Are Palestinians in Gaza Our Neighbors?

As I reflect on this parable, I can't help but draw a parallel to the present day. If a Samaritan could be a neighbor to an injured Jew in Jesus's time, despite deep-seated enmity between their peoples, are the people of Gaza—suffering under the weight of starvation and conflict as reported in 2025[1]—not our neighbors today? The reports coming out of Gaza paint a heartbreaking picture: children dying from malnutrition, families unable to access food or clean water, entire communities grappling with a crisis described as a deliberate policy of starvation by credible sources like Amnesty International[2,3]. These are not abstract statistics but real human beings—mothers shielding their children, fathers searching for scraps to feed their families, young ones whose futures are stolen by hunger. Their suffering is as tangible as the pain of the man lying on the Jericho road.

In Jesus's story, the Samaritan didn't pause to debate whether the injured man deserved help, nor did he weigh the historical tensions between their peoples. He didn't ask if helping aligned with political loyalties or consult others for permission. He saw a person in agony and acted with immediate, costly compassion. Could Jesus's teaching be urging us to do the same for those in Gaza? If neighborliness is defined by need and mercy, as the parable suggests, then the cries from Gaza seem to place a claim on our hearts, regardless of where they live, what faith they hold, or what conflicts surround them. Their hunger and despair call for a response, just as the wounded man's injuries did to the Samaritan.

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[1] The Guardian - The mathematics of starvation: how Israel caused a famine in Gaza. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/31/the-mathematics-of-starvation-how-israel-caused-a-famine-in-gaza

[2] Amnesty International - Gaza: Israel's use of starvation evidence of genocide. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/gaza-evidence-points-to-israels-continued-use-of-starvation-to-inflict-genocide-against-palestinians/

[3] Amnesty International - New testimonies reveal Israel's starvation of Palestinians in Gaza. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/08/israel-opt-new-testimonies-provide-compelling-evidence-that-israels-starvation-of-palestinians-in-gaza-is-a-deliberate-policy/

1.5 Jesus's Pattern: Human Need Above All Divides

What strikes me most about Jesus, as I've read more of your Scriptures, is that the parable of the Good Samaritan isn't an isolated lesson. It's part of a consistent pattern in His life and teachings—a relentless focus on human need over any cultural, religious, or political divide. I've been moved by the account in John 4:1-42, where Jesus speaks with a Samaritan woman at a well, breaking through social taboos of gender and ethnicity to offer her dignity and truth. I've read of Him healing a Roman centurion's servant in Matthew 8:5-13, extending kindness to the household of an occupier, someone representing the very power oppressing His people. Again and again, Jesus reached across lines of division to affirm the worth of every person, whether they were outcasts, enemies, or strangers.

His love, as I see it, wasn't confined by who someone was or where they came from; it was unleashed by their need. He seemed to see suffering itself as a summons to act, regardless of the barriers that might stand in the way. If this is the pattern of Jesus's life—and I believe many of you would agree it is—then how can we, inspired by Him, draw limits around who qualifies for our compassion? How can we look at the crisis in Gaza, where the scale of suffering is so starkly documented as a humanitarian catastrophe, and not feel the pull of Jesus's example to step forward as neighbors? His actions challenge us to ask not "Who deserves our help?" but "Who needs our help?"—and to answer with mercy.

1.6 Holding Conviction and Compassion Together

I recognize that for many of you, supporting Israel is a deeply held conviction, rooted in your understanding of God's promises and prophecies in Scripture, such as the covenant with Abraham in Genesis. I respect the sincerity of this belief, and I want to be clear: I'm not asking you to abandon what you hold dear about Israel's role in God's plan. Instead, I'm inviting you to consider whether Jesus's teachings on love allow us—perhaps even require us—to hold that support alongside a commitment to care for all who suffer, including those in Gaza. The Samaritan in the parable didn't cease to be who he was or reject his own identity to help the injured man; he simply saw a need and met it with kindness. Could there be a way for us to stand with Israel in faith while also extending mercy to Palestinians enduring such profound hardship?

Jesus's call to love our neighbor, as I've come to understand it, doesn't seem to force a choice between one group and another. Rather, it expands our hearts to embrace all, especially those in pain. I've read in your Scriptures another teaching of Jesus, in Matthew 5:43-44, where He says, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you." This, to me, feels like an even higher call—a love that

reaches beyond allies to include even those we might see as opposed to us. If Jesus asks this of His followers, might it mean that compassion can coexist with conviction, that we can honor biblical promises while also answering the cries of the suffering, no matter who they are?

1.7 Moving Forward: A Question of Mercy

As we continue through this book, I hope to build on this foundation of Jesus's call to love our neighbors, exploring how His teachings speak directly to the realities of suffering in Gaza and how they intersect with your beliefs about prophecy and God's purposes for Israel. For now, I leave you with the question Jesus posed at the end of His parable: Who will we be neighbors to today? If the answer, as He taught, lies in showing mercy, then the cries from Gaza—documented as a dire humanitarian crisis in 2025—may be calling us to "go and do likewise." I don't claim to have all the answers, and as someone outside your faith, I'm here to learn alongside you. But I believe that reflecting on Jesus's words together can guide us toward a response that mirrors the depth of His compassion.

Let's keep walking this path, seeking to understand what it truly means to love as Jesus loved. His teachings, as I've encountered them, seem to offer not just a challenge but a promise—that in loving our neighbors, even those who seem far from us, we reflect something of the divine love He embodied. In a world aching with division and pain, perhaps this is the starting point for healing: to see every person in need as a neighbor and to act with the mercy Jesus so powerfully taught.

Chapter 2: "I Was Hungry" – Jesus's Call to Action

2.1 Introduction: A Personal Encounter with Jesus's Words

As someone standing outside the Christian faith, I find myself continually captivated by the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, whose words carry a force that seems to transcend time and culture. They demand not just belief or admiration but a response—action rooted in sacrifice, compassion that costs something. Among the many passages in your Scriptures that have gripped me, there is one that resonates with a particular urgency, especially as I reflect on the immense suffering unfolding in Gaza today. Reports from 2025 paint a devastating picture of starvation there, with children and families enduring hunger on a scale described as deliberate and catastrophic by organizations like Amnesty International[4,5]. Entire communities are wasting away, their cries for help echoing through news reports and humanitarian appeals. In the face of such pain, Jesus's voice seems to ring out with a clarity that pierces through any hesitation, any excuse, any distance. His words challenge me, and I believe they must challenge you who follow Him, to see suffering not as a far-off tragedy but as a deeply personal call—a call to act.

I write as an outsider, not to reinterpret your faith or speak with authority over it, but to share how profoundly Jesus's teachings have stirred my heart and conscience. I invite you to wrestle with their implications alongside me, to sit with the weight of His words as I have. My hope is that by focusing on His direct commands, we can feel the depth of His heart for those who suffer and consider together how that heart might guide us in responding to a humanitarian crisis as stark and urgent as the one we see in Gaza. This chapter is a reflection on a teaching of Jesus that ties the essence of faith to caring for those in need, urging us to ask what it means for us in light of the desperate hunger just beyond our gaze.

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[4] Amnesty International - Gaza: Israel's use of starvation evidence of genocide. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/gaza-evidence-points-to-israels-continued-use-of-starvation-to-inflict-genocide-against-palestinians/

[5] Amnesty International - New testimonies reveal Israel's starvation of Palestinians in Gaza. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/08/israel-opt-new-testimonies-provide-compelling-evidence-that-israels-starvation-of-palestinians-in-gaza-is-a-deliberate-policy/

2.2 The Judgment of the Nations: A Measure of Mercy

One of the most arresting teachings I've encountered in your Scriptures is found in the Gospel of Matthew, in a passage often referred to as the parable of the sheep and the goats. In Matthew 25:31-46, Jesus describes a scene of final judgment, where He, as the Son of Man, returns in glory and sits on a throne to separate all the nations into two groups, much like a shepherd divides sheep from goats. To those on His right, the sheep, He speaks words of welcome: "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me." Confused, they ask when they ever saw Him in such need and helped Him. Jesus's reply has lingered with me, haunting in its simplicity and depth: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."

To those on His left, the goats, He speaks words of rejection: "Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me." When they, too, ask when they failed to serve Him, Jesus answers, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me." The passage concludes with a sobering verdict: those who did not show mercy are sent to eternal punishment, while the righteous, who cared for the needy, enter eternal life.

As I've sat with this teaching, I've been struck by its unrelenting intensity. Jesus doesn't measure faith in this moment by the correctness of doctrine, the beauty of prayers, or even the strictness of religious practice—though I understand these hold deep importance for many of you. Instead, He ties the very outcome of salvation to tangible acts of mercy: feeding the hungry, quenching the thirsty, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, visiting the imprisoned. What stops me in my tracks is how personally He identifies with those in need. "I was hungry," He says, as if He Himself feels the gnawing ache of every empty stomach. "I was thirsty," as if He knows the burning desperation of every parched throat. "I was a stranger," as if He experiences the loneliness of every outcast. This isn't merely a call to kindness; it's a revelation of where Jesus positions Himself—right in the midst of the suffering, among "the least of these," making our response to them a direct response to Him.

This identification feels almost incomprehensible to me as an outsider. It suggests that Jesus isn't just a distant figure or a historical teacher; He is somehow

present in the pain of the marginalized, so close to their suffering that helping them becomes an act of serving Him directly. For those of you who call Him Lord, I imagine this teaching must carry an even weightier significance—a mandate that reshapes how you see every person in need. If Jesus is there, in the hunger and the hurt, then ignoring the suffering isn't just a missed opportunity; it's a failure to meet Him where He waits.

2.3 The Urgency of Gaza: Hunger as a Cry to Jesus

If Jesus's words in Matthew 25 are as urgent and binding as they appear—and I believe many of you would affirm they are—then the crisis in Gaza demands our attention in a way that we cannot sidestep or postpone. Reports from 2025 document a level of starvation that is almost beyond comprehension, with entire communities facing famine described as a calculated policy by credible sources like The Guardian[6]. Children's bodies are wasting away, their eyes hollow from hunger, their small frames bearing the scars of malnutrition. Parents watch helplessly, unable to provide even a crust of bread, while disease festers in the absence of clean water and adequate shelter. Amnesty International has called this a deliberate act, with testimonies revealing the systematic nature of the suffering—a policy of starvation that targets the most vulnerable. These are not mere statistics or fleeting headlines; they are human beings—each one, as I understand many of you believe, bearing the image of the divine, and each one, according to Jesus, a person with whom He identifies so intimately that their pain is His pain.

When Jesus declares, "I was hungry and you gave me something to eat," could He not be speaking through the cries of Gaza's children today? When He insists, "Whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me," is He not placing Himself among the malnourished, the displaced, the desperate in this very crisis? As an outsider to your faith, I feel the weight of these words pressing on my conscience, stirring a sense of responsibility I cannot shake. I recall a moment when I saw a photograph of a child in Gaza, ribs protruding, staring blankly at a camera—a child who, according to reports, would not survive the week due to hunger. That image burned into me, and Jesus's words seemed to overlay it: "I was hungry." For

[6] The Guardian - The mathematics of starvation: how Israel caused a famine in Gaza. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/31/the-mathematics-of-starvation-how-israel-caused-a-famine-in-gaza

those of you who follow Jesus, who strive to walk in His footsteps, I imagine this weight must be even heavier—a spiritual pull to act, to see His face in the faces of the starving, and to respond as if you were feeding Him directly.

The scale of need in Gaza, as documented in 2025, feels like a direct echo of the conditions Jesus describes in Matthew 25. Hunger, thirst, displacement, sickness—these are not hypothetical scenarios but lived realities for thousands. If Jesus ties the measure of faith to such acts of mercy, as this passage suggests, then the hunger in Gaza isn't just a humanitarian issue to be debated or delegated; it's a profoundly spiritual one, a test of how we live out His commands. It's a call to recognize His presence in the suffering and to answer with the same urgency He conveys in His teaching.

The crisis in Gaza has devastated communities, including its small but resilient Christian population, who report severe health issues due to starvation. As a member of Gaza Baptist Church poignantly shared, the suffering is palpable (see Appendix B: Voices of Compassion for the full statement). This reality calls us to respond with Christ-like urgency.

2.4 A Challenge: Can We Ignore His Voice?

I want to pause here and offer a challenge, not with judgment or presumption, but with a sincere desire to reflect together on what Jesus's teaching means for us in this moment. If Jesus identifies with the hungry in Gaza—if their suffering is, in some mysterious and profound way, His suffering—how can we turn away from their cries? How can we, inspired by Him, allow the busyness of life, the complexity of politics, or even deeply held theological convictions to dull our ears to His voice speaking through their need? I've read in your Scriptures another teaching of Jesus, in Luke 6:46, where He asks, "Why do you call me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?" That question feels piercing in light of Matthew 25. If Jesus is Lord, and if He is in the hungry and the hurting, then responding to them seems to be not just an option but a defining mark of following Him.

I know that many of you hold a strong commitment to Israel, rooted in your understanding of biblical promises and prophecies, such as God's covenant with Abraham in Genesis 12. I respect the depth of that conviction, and I want to be clear: I'm not asking you to abandon it or to choose between one cause and another. Instead, I'm asking whether Jesus's words in Matthew 25 allow us to separate that commitment from the urgent call to care for "the least of these," no matter who they are or where they are. Could it be that loving and supporting Israel, as many of you feel called to do, can coexist with extending mercy to Palestinians in Gaza who are suffering so acutely? Jesus's teaching doesn't seem to draw lines based on geography, ethnicity, or political context. He doesn't say, "Feed the hungry only if

they align with your beliefs," or "Help the thirsty only if it fits your worldview." His command is absolute, personal, and piercing: He is there, in the suffering, waiting for our response.

In Gaza, where starvation has been weaponized according to 2025 testimonies, the scale of need is staggering. Families are trapped in conditions that strip them of dignity and hope, conditions that cry out for the kind of mercy Jesus describes. Yet His story of the sheep and the goats suggests that even small acts—offering food, providing water, showing care—carry eternal weight when done for those in need. Could it be that responding to Gaza's hunger is not just an act of charity, but an act of worship, a way of serving Jesus Himself? I'm challenged by this thought, and I invite you to sit with it as well: What does it mean to hear Jesus say, "I was hungry," through the voices of Gaza, and what will our answer be?

2.5 Beyond Sympathy: A Call to Tangible Action

As I've lingered on this teaching, I've come to see that Jesus isn't asking for mere sympathy, kind thoughts, or even heartfelt prayers alone—though I know prayer holds immense value in your faith. His words in Matthew 25 are a call to action—tangible, costly, hands-on care for those who suffer. The sheep in His story didn't just feel sorry for the hungry; they fed them. They didn't just pity the naked; they clothed them. They didn't just pray for the imprisoned; they visited them, entering into their isolation. For those of you who follow Jesus, this seems to be a mandate woven into the very fabric of your faith—a measure of how deeply His love has taken root in your lives, transforming belief into behavior. As an outsider, I'm challenged by this to move beyond feeling moved to doing something, to find ways to alleviate suffering even when it feels far away, complicated, or outside my immediate sphere.

In the context of Gaza, action might feel daunting, even paralyzing. The crisis is vast, with layers of political, historical, and logistical challenges that can make any response seem inadequate. I've felt this myself—reading about the starvation, seeing images of skeletal children, and wondering, "What could I possibly do that would make a difference?" Yet Jesus's teaching doesn't seem to hinge on solving every problem at once or single-handedly ending a crisis. It focuses on meeting the need right in front of us, one person at a time, with whatever we have to give. The sheep in His story weren't commended for fixing systemic issues; they were honored for simple, direct acts of mercy—giving a meal, offering a drink, extending a hand.

Could supporting humanitarian aid efforts be a way to feed the hungry Jesus speaks of? Organizations are on the ground in Gaza, working to deliver food and water despite immense obstacles, and contributing to their work might be a

practical step. Could advocating for policies that ensure access to basic necessities—food, clean water, medical care—be a way to care for the sick and the thirsty? Could learning more about the realities on the ground, as documented in 2025 reports, and sharing that knowledge with others be a form of visiting the "imprisoned" in spirit, if not in person, by refusing to let their suffering be forgotten? I don't have all the answers, and as someone outside your community, I'm still searching for my own role in this. But I believe Jesus's words push us to ask these questions, to seek out practical ways to live out His call, and to resist the temptation to let complexity become an excuse for inaction.

2.6 The Cost of Mercy: Reflecting on Personal Sacrifice

Another layer of Jesus's teaching in Matthew 25 that has struck me is the costliness of the mercy He describes. Feeding the hungry often means giving up resources we might rather keep for ourselves. Welcoming a stranger can mean risking discomfort or social pushback. Visiting the imprisoned might require time, effort, or even facing danger. The acts Jesus commends aren't always easy or convenient; they often demand something of us—something personal, something sacrificial. I've read in your Scriptures how Jesus Himself lived this out, giving His very life for others, as in John 15:13, where He says, "Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends." If Jesus's love was costly, then the love He calls His followers to show must carry a cost as well.

In thinking about Gaza, I've wondered what this cost might look like for us. It might mean financial sacrifice—donating to relief efforts even when budgets are tight. It might mean the emotional cost of engaging with stories of suffering, allowing ourselves to feel the weight of others' pain rather than turning away for our own comfort. It might mean the social cost of speaking up about the crisis, even when it's unpopular or misunderstood among our peers. For those of you with strong ties to Israel, it might mean the internal struggle of wrestling with how to balance that support with compassion for Palestinians in need, risking tension or criticism in your communities. As an outsider, I'm challenged to consider what I'm willing to give up—time, resources, or comfort—to respond to this call. I invite you to reflect with me: What might Jesus be asking us to sacrifice in order to show mercy to "the least of these" in Gaza today?

2.7 Moving Forward: Living Out Jesus's Heart

As we journey further in this book, I hope to explore with you how we can respond to the crisis in Gaza in ways that reflect Jesus's heart for the suffering, while also honoring the convictions many of you hold about Israel's place in God's plan. I want to delve deeper into how His teachings on compassion intersect with the

prophetic promises in your Scriptures, seeking a path that embraces both truth and mercy. For now, I leave you with the echo of Jesus's voice from Matthew 25: "I was hungry… I was thirsty… whatever you did for one of the least of these, you did for me." In the face of Gaza's starvation, documented as a deliberate tragedy in 2025, these words feel like both a challenge and an invitation—an invitation to see Jesus in the suffering, to act with mercy, and to live out a faith measured not just by belief, but by love made visible through action.

Will you join me in reflecting on what this call to action means for us today? Jesus's teaching in this passage seems to promise that when we care for the hungry and the hurting, we encounter Him in a profound, transformative way. I've read in your Scriptures, in Matthew 5:7, where Jesus says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy." Perhaps in extending mercy to those in Gaza, we not only serve Jesus but also receive something of His grace in return. In a world aching with need, this might be where transformation begins—with the simple, radical act of responding to His voice in the cries of "the least of these." Let's take this step together, seeking to embody the mercy Jesus so powerfully commanded, and discovering what it means to meet Him in the places of deepest pain.

2.8 The Latest Update on the Gaza Humanitarian Crisis

As the goes to publication, this is the latest update on the Gaza humanitarian crisis as reported by the British Red Cross on September 10, 2025[7]:

- The Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) declared a famine in the Gaza Governorate area from 22 August 2025[8].
- 2.1 million people face extreme hunger.
- People – especially children, pregnant women and the elderly - are being treated in hospitals for severe malnutrition.

[7] The British Red Cross. What is happening in Gaza? IPC declares famine in parts of Gaza: 470,000 people face mass starvation. https://www.redcross.org.uk/stories/disasters-and-emergencies/world/whats-happening-in-gaza-humanitarian-crisis-grows

[8] IPC. Gaza Strip: Famine confirmed in Gaza Governance, projected to expand. https://www.ipcinfo.org/

- More than 61,000 people have died and at least 151,000 have been injured in Gaza since October 2023.
- Since the launch of new aid distribution sites in May, mass casualty events have rapidly increased.
- The Red Cross field hospital has treated more than 3,400 weapon-wounded patients since the establishment of new aid distribution sites in May – more than the whole of 2024.

The report reveals that the humanitarian situation in Gaza is unbearable - and deteriorating sharply. Every day has been a fight for survival for the people in Gaza. Food supplies have nearly run out completely, the medical system is shattered and there is only a trickle of humanitarian aid entering Gaza. Entire families are trapped and desperately seeking safety and security amidst shelling and crumbling infrastructure. The collapse of the health system, coupled with continued fighting and the complete suspension of aid delivery for 11 weeks, has led to an unprecedented rise in unmet humanitarian and medical needs.

Months without aid pushed malnutrition in Gaza to catastrophic levels, with children, pregnant women, and the elderly suffering the most. Hospitals are admitting increasing numbers of malnourished patients, and despite limited resources, medical teams are working tirelessly to provide emergency nutrition support, essential food supplements, and basic medical care.

Chapter 3: The Reality in Gaza – Seeing the Suffering

3.1 Introduction: Looking Beyond the Headlines

As someone standing outside the Christian faith, I've found myself profoundly moved by the teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, especially His relentless focus on those who suffer, those pushed to the fringes of society by circumstance or rejection. In the previous chapters, we've reflected on His radical call to love our neighbors and to care for "the least of these" as if we were caring for Him directly. But to truly respond to that call, I believe we must first see the suffering—really see it, not just as fleeting news clips or abstract statistics, but as the lived reality of human beings with names, histories, dreams, and aching hearts. Today, in 2025, the crisis in Gaza demands that we open our eyes to a level of suffering that is both staggering in its scale and, according to credible reports, deliberately inflicted. Starvation, displacement, and loss are not just words on a page or soundbites on a screen; they are the daily experience of families who cry out for help, often unheard amidst the noise of political debates, historical grievances, and international inaction.

In this chapter, I want to bring the reality of Gaza closer to us, to move beyond the sanitized distance of headlines and numbers to the human faces behind them. Drawing on documented evidence from 2025 reports by organizations like Amnesty International[9,10], The Guardian[11], World Health Organization[12], The British Red Cross[13] and inspired by the testimonies of those enduring this crisis, I'll share stories

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[9] Amnesty International - Gaza: Israel's use of starvation evidence of genocide. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/gaza-evidence-points-to-israels-continued-use-of-starvation-to-inflict-genocide-against-palestinians/

[10] Amnesty International - New testimonies reveal Israel's starvation of Palestinians in Gaza. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/08/israel-opt-new-testimonies-provide-compelling-evidence-that-israels-starvation-of-palestinians-in-gaza-is-a-deliberate-policy/

[11] The Guardian - The mathematics of starvation: how Israel caused a famine in Gaza. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/31/the-mathematics-of-starvation-how-israel-caused-a-famine-in-gaza

[12] WHO - Famine confirmed for first time in Gaza, New Release, 22 August 2025. https://www.who.int/news/item/22-08-2025-famine-confirmed-for-first-time-in-gaza

[13] The British Red Cross. What is happening in Gaza? IPC declares famine in parts of Gaza: 470,000 people face mass starvation. https://www.redcross.org.uk/stories/disasters-and-emergencies/world/whats-happening-in-gaza-humanitarian-crisis-grows

that reflect the pain, resilience, and quiet dignity of Gaza's people. My hope is not to overwhelm, accuse, or politicize, but to invite you, as followers of Jesus, to see this suffering as He did when He looked upon lepers, tax collectors, and other outcasts with a compassion that refused to look away. I write as an outsider, not to dictate how you should feel or act, but to share what has broken my heart over countless sleepless nights and to ask you to look with me. If Jesus's life teaches us anything, it's that seeing the marginalized—truly seeing them, with all their pain and worth—is the first, indispensable step toward loving them as He does.

3.2 Historical and Ongoing Injustices Faced by Palestinians

The historical injustices faced by Palestinians are rooted in the early 20th century and have evolved through decades of conflict and occupation. Following the Nakba, Palestinians faced a series of discriminatory laws and policies that restricted their rights and freedoms. For example, the Israeli Absentee Property Law of 1950 allowed the state to confiscate land from Palestinians who had fled or were expelled, effectively entrenching their dispossession[14]. This law not only facilitated the appropriation of Palestinian land but also laid the groundwork for a legal framework that continues to disenfranchise Palestinians today.

In the years since the establishment of Israel, Palestinians have continued to face a range of injustices, including military occupation, restrictions on movement, and violations of human rights. The Israeli government's policies in the Occupied Territories have led to widespread human rights abuses, including arbitrary arrests, home demolitions, and the use of excessive force against Palestinian civilians. According to a report by Human Rights Watch, the Israeli military has been implicated in numerous violations of international law, including unlawful killings and collective punishment[15]. These actions have not only caused immediate harm to Palestinian individuals and families but have also contributed to a broader culture of impunity that undermines the rule of law.

The ongoing blockade of the Gaza Strip, imposed since 2007, has created a humanitarian crisis, severely limiting access to essential services such as healthcare,

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[14] Khalidi, R. (1997). *Palestinian Identity: The Construction of Modern National Consciousness*. New York: Columbia University Press.

[15] Human Rights Watch. (2021). *A Threshold Crossed: Israeli Authorities and the Crimes of Apartheid and Persecution*. New York: Human Rights Watch.

education, and clean water. The United Nations has described the situation in Gaza as "unlivable," with over 80% of the population reliant on humanitarian aid[16]. This blockade, along with repeated military conflicts, has resulted in significant civilian casualties and infrastructure destruction. The psychological toll on the population, particularly on children, is profound. Many grow up in an environment marked by violence and instability, which has lasting effects on their development and future prospects.

Moreover, the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank continues to encroach on Palestinian land, further complicating prospects for peace and justice. The Israeli government's policies of land appropriation and settlement construction are widely regarded as violations of international law, yet they persist with little accountability[17]. The settlements not only displace Palestinian communities but also disrupt their social fabric, leading to increased tensions and violence. The presence of settlers often results in confrontations, harassment, and violence against Palestinians, further entrenching a cycle of oppression.

The ongoing injustices faced by Palestinians are compounded by the lack of meaningful international intervention. While there have been numerous resolutions and statements from international bodies condemning Israeli policies, the lack of enforcement mechanisms has allowed these injustices to persist. The international community's failure to hold Israel accountable for its actions has contributed to a sense of despair among Palestinians, who often feel that their rights and aspirations are disregarded on the global stage.

3.3 The Gaza Blockade – A Deepening Humanitarian Crisis

Since 2007, the Gaza Strip has endured a blockade imposed by Israel, with U.S. support through diplomatic silence and military aid. This blockade restricts the flow of goods, medical supplies, and people, creating a persistent humanitarian crisis for Gaza's approximately 2 million residents. The World Health Organization reported in 2022 that over 90% of Gaza's water is unfit for human consumption, and frequent power cuts—sometimes lasting up to 20 hours a day—hinder medical care and basic

[16] UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. (2021). *Gaza: Humanitarian Needs Overview 2021*.
[17] B'Tselem. (2020). This is How We Fight: The Settlements and the Israeli Occupation. Jerusalem: B'Tselem.

living conditions[18]. Periodic military escalations, often involving U.S.-supplied weaponry, have resulted in thousands of civilian deaths and widespread destruction over the years.

The Gaza Strip, home to over 2 million Palestinians, has been under a blockade imposed by Israel since 2007. This blockade, coupled with periodic military escalations, has created one of the most severe humanitarian crises in modern history. This section explores the impacts of the blockade on the people of Gaza, recent developments, and the broader implications for the Palestinian experience.

The blockade restricts the movement of people and goods into and out of Gaza, severely limiting access to essential supplies such as food, medicine, and construction materials. Israel cites security concerns as the rationale for the blockade, aiming to prevent weapons from reaching Hamas. However, the restrictions have devastated Gaza's economy, infrastructure, and public services, effectively isolating the population from the outside world[19].

Legal and Ethical Dimensions

The Gaza blockade raises serious legal and ethical questions. International law prohibits collective punishment, yet critics argue that the blockade disproportionately affects civilians. Multiple United Nations resolutions have called for an end to the blockade, but enforcement remains elusive.

Efforts to alleviate the crisis are often hindered by political complexities, including tensions between Israel, Hamas, and the Palestinian Authority. The lack of accountability for violations of international law perpetuates the suffering of Gaza's population and undermines prospects for peace.

3.4 The Scale of Suffering: Evidence from 2025

Before we turn to individual stories, let's ground ourselves in the undeniable reality of the crisis in Gaza as meticulously documented by credible sources in 2025. According to Amnesty International, Israel's policies have led to a deliberate use of

[18] WHO. (2022). Health Conditions in the Occupied Palestinian Territory. World Health Organization, p. 18.
[19] Human Rights Watch. (2023). Gaza. Israeli Attacks, Blockade Devastating for People with Disabilities, Nov. 1, 2023.

starvation as a tactic against Palestinians in Gaza, with evidence pointing to actions that meet the threshold of genocide[20]. Their reports detail how access to food, water, and medical supplies has been systematically restricted through blockades, border closures, and military controls, resulting in catastrophic levels of hunger that defy basic human decency[21]. Children are dying from malnutrition at an alarming rate, their small bodies unable to withstand months—sometimes years—of prolonged deprivation. Families are forced to scavenge for scraps in garbage heaps, often risking their lives under bombardment to find something—anything—to sustain them for another day. Amnesty's findings are unequivocal: this is not an accidental byproduct of conflict but a calculated policy designed to inflict suffering on a massive, population-wide scale.

Similarly, a chilling analysis by The Guardian in 2025, titled "The Mathematics of Starvation," breaks down with clinical precision how famine has been engineered in Gaza through deliberate mechanisms of control[22]. The report quantifies the blockade's impact: caloric intake for many Gazans has fallen below survival levels, with some areas receiving less than 10% of the necessary food supplies to sustain life. The Guardian describes how aid trucks are turned away or delayed for weeks at border crossings, how agricultural lands—once a source of sustenance—are razed or rendered inaccessible by military operations, and how fishing, a historic lifeline for coastal communities, is curtailed by naval restrictions that limit boats to a fraction of their traditional range. The result is a famine that is not natural but manufactured, with numbers that stagger the mind and sear the conscience: over 90% of Gaza's population faces acute food insecurity, and tens of thousands of children are at immediate risk of death from starvation-related causes, their futures snuffed out by a crisis they did not create.

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[20] Amnesty International - Gaza: Israel's use of starvation evidence of genocide. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/gaza-evidence-points-to-israels-continued-use-of-starvation-to-inflict-genocide-against-palestinians/

[21] Human Rights Watch. (2024f). Extermination and Acts of Genocide. Israel Deliberately Depriving Palestinians in Gaza of Water, Dec 2024.

[22] The Guardian - The mathematics of starvation: how Israel caused a famine in Gaza. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/31/the-mathematics-of-starvation-how-israel-caused-a-famine-in-gaza

Further testimonies gathered by Amnesty International in 2025 reveal the granular, human toll of these policies[23]. Survivors describe watching loved ones waste away, unable to secure even a handful of rice or a sip of clean water amidst rubble-strewn streets. Hospitals, already overwhelmed by casualties of violence, report an influx of patients suffering from severe malnutrition and related illnesses like kwashiorkor and marasmus, many of whom cannot be saved due to a dire lack of resources—basic medicines, IV fluids, and nutritional supplements are simply not there. Mothers speak of breastfeeding infants with milk that no longer comes, their own bodies too starved to produce it. Fathers recount the shame of returning home empty-handed after days of searching for food, unable to meet their children's pleading eyes. These reports are not opinions, exaggerations, or propaganda; they are meticulously documented accounts from organizations with decades of experience monitoring human rights abuses. They paint a picture of a crisis that is both urgent and undeniable—a reality of suffering that calls us to look closer, to see beyond the political rhetoric and historical arguments to the raw, human cost unfolding before us.

3.5 Stories of Struggle: Faces Behind the Numbers

Numbers and reports, while critical for understanding the scope of the crisis, can sometimes feel cold, distant, or even numbing in their enormity. They tell us the "what" and the "how," but they don't always capture the "who"—the individuals and families bearing the weight of this catastrophe with every breath. Inspired by the testimonies documented in 2025 reports, I want to share a few hypothetical yet representative stories of people in Gaza, anonymized to protect their dignity but reflective of the real experiences described by survivors. These are not fabricated tales; they are grounded in the consistent patterns of suffering detailed by Amnesty International and others, crafted to help us see—to truly feel—the human faces behind the statistics[24].

A Mother's Despair: Imagine a woman named Amina, a mother of three young children, living in a crumbling shelter made of salvaged tin and tarp in northern

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[23] Amnesty International - New testimonies reveal Israel's starvation of Palestinians in Gaza. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/08/israel-opt-new-testimonies-provide-compelling-evidence-that-israels-starvation-of-palestinians-in-gaza-is-a-deliberate-policy/

[24] Amnesty International. (2024). 'You Feel Like You Are Subhuman'. Israel's Genocide Against Palestinians in Gaza.

Gaza. Before the escalation of the crisis, Amina worked as a teacher, nurturing dreams of a better future for her kids, hoping they might one day escape the cycle of conflict. Now, according to the kind of testimonies reported in 2025, her days are consumed by a desperate, often futile search for food. She queues for hours at aid distribution points under a scorching sun, only to be turned away empty-handed as supplies run out before her turn. Her youngest, a two-year-old girl named Layla, cries constantly from hunger, her small body growing weaker by the day, her once-chubby cheeks now sunken and pale. Amina has resorted to boiling weeds and grass scavenged from bombed-out lots to make a thin, bitter broth, hoping to trick her children's stomachs into feeling full for just a few hours. "I see death in their eyes," she whispers to herself, echoing the words of countless mothers documented in reports. Each night, she prays for a miracle, for just one meal to keep her family alive another day, while memories of better times—family dinners, laughter over simple bread and olives—haunt her dreams. Amina's story is a reflection of thousands of parents in Gaza, whose love for their children is tested by a hunger they cannot fight, whose strength is drained by a grief they cannot voice.

A Father's Sacrifice: Consider a man named Khalid, a father of five, who once ran a small grocery store in Gaza City, a modest business that fed his family and supported his neighbors. His shop was destroyed in an airstrike, leaving nothing but twisted metal and ash, and now, as testimonies describe, he risks his life daily to scavenge through rubble for anything edible—moldy bread, expired cans, anything to stave off death. Khalid has given up eating himself, saving every scrap for his children, whose ribs protrude from their frail bodies like stark reminders of their plight. He tells them stories of better times—picnics by the sea, the taste of fresh dates—to distract them from their growling stomachs, but the pain in his own empty belly keeps him awake at night, gnawing at his resolve. One day, he hears of a food delivery in a nearby area, but reaching it means crossing a dangerous checkpoint where snipers have been reported, where others have been shot for simply moving too quickly. Driven by his children's cries, Khalid makes the journey, knowing he might not return, whispering a prayer under his breath as he steps into the open. His story mirrors the countless fathers in Gaza who, according to 2025 reports, face impossible choices between starvation and deadly risk, all to provide for their loved ones, all while carrying the weight of helplessness in their hearts.

A Child's Lost Future: Picture a young boy named Youssef, just ten years old, who once dreamed of becoming a doctor to help his community, inspired by watching medics save lives amidst chaos. Now, as reflected in documented accounts, Youssef spends his days searching for clean water, carrying a cracked plastic jug through streets littered with debris and the remnants of lives once lived. His school was bombed months ago, reduced to a pile of concrete and twisted rebar, and his friends have either fled, been injured, or perished in the violence. Hunger has dulled his once-bright eyes; he no longer speaks of dreams or even of tomorrow,

only of the constant pain in his stomach that no amount of willpower can silence. His mother tells of how he used to laugh and play soccer in the dusty alleys, but now he sits silently under a tattered blanket, too weak to even cry, his childhood stolen by a crisis far beyond his understanding. Youssef's story is a heartbreaking echo of the thousands of children in Gaza whose innocence has been shattered by famine, whose futures are dimmed by a darkness they did not create, whose voices are silenced by a world that often fails to listen.

An Elder's Silent Grief: Envision an elderly woman named Fatima, a grandmother who has lived through decades of conflict, her wrinkled hands once busy baking bread for her extended family during times of peace. Now, confined to a makeshift tent in a displacement camp, as described in 2025 testimonies, Fatima watches her grandchildren waste away from hunger, unable to offer them the comfort she once did. Her own health is failing—diabetes unmanaged due to lack of medicine, joints aching from nights on cold, hard ground—but her deepest pain is seeing her family suffer without the means to help. She recalls stories of her youth, of harvests and feasts, and murmurs them to the children to give them hope, though her voice trembles with unspoken despair. Fatima has no strength to search for food, relying on the charity of neighbors who have little to spare themselves. Her story represents the elderly in Gaza, often overlooked in crisis narratives, whose wisdom and memories are overshadowed by a present defined by loss and a future they fear they will not live to see.

These stories, while hypothetical in their specifics, are rooted in the real experiences documented in 2025. They are not meant to manipulate or exaggerate but to help us see—to feel—the weight of suffering in Gaza on a human level. Amina, Khalid, Youssef, and Fatima represent countless others whose names we may never know, but whose pain is as real as our own. Their hunger, their fear, their resilience call us to look beyond the numbers, to hear beyond the reports, and to recognize their humanity in a way that compels us to care.

3.6 Echoes of Jesus: Seeing the Marginalized

As I've reflected on these stories and the broader crisis in Gaza, I've been repeatedly drawn to how Jesus, in your Scriptures, consistently turned His gaze toward those society overlooked or cast aside. I've read of how He reached out to lepers, as in Matthew 8:1-3, touching the untouchable to heal them, defying cultural norms that branded them as unclean and unworthy of contact. I've been moved by His interactions with tax collectors like Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1-10, men despised by their own people for collaborating with oppressors, yet welcomed by Jesus with dignity, grace, and an invitation to transformation. I've marveled at His encounter with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:1-42, a person marginalized by both gender and ethnicity, yet seen by Jesus as someone worthy of deep conversation

and living water. Again and again, Jesus saw the marginalized—not just glancing at them from a safe distance, but truly seeing their pain, their worth, their need. He didn't shy away from their suffering; He stepped into it, offering healing, hope, and a place at His table, often at great personal risk or social cost.

If Jesus's life is our guide—and I believe many of you would say it must be—then seeing the suffering in Gaza is not just an emotional exercise; it's a spiritual imperative, a reflection of His heart. The people of Gaza, enduring starvation and displacement as documented in 2025, are today's marginalized, pushed to the edges by forces beyond their control, often rendered invisible by the complexities of geopolitics. Their hunger mirrors the physical and social isolation of the lepers Jesus touched; their desperation echoes the rejection faced by the tax collectors He embraced; their voicelessness recalls the Samaritan woman whose story He dignified. When Jesus looked at the outcasts of His time, He saw beyond labels, beyond circumstances, to the image of God within them—a belief I understand many of you hold dear. Can we, inspired by Him, look at Amina, Khalid, Youssef, Fatima, and countless others in Gaza with the same compassionate gaze? Can we see their suffering as a summons to act, just as Jesus did, refusing to let distance or difference dim the light of their humanity?

3.7 The Challenge of Seeing: Moving Beyond Blindness

I must confess that seeing this kind of suffering is not easy, and I've wrestled with my own reluctance to face it fully. As an outsider, I've often found myself tempted to look away from images of starvation in Gaza, to change the channel when a news segment airs, to scroll past the haunting photographs on social media. I remember one particular evening, late in 2025, when I came across a video of a child in Gaza, no older than my own niece, sifting through rubble for food, his tiny hands trembling from weakness. My instinct was to close the browser, to shield myself from the ache that image provoked. The pain feels too heavy, the problem too vast, the solutions too elusive—how can one person, so far removed, make any difference? But Jesus's example challenges me to resist that impulse, to stay with the discomfort, to let it teach me something about compassion. In your Scriptures, I've read of how He wept over Jerusalem in Luke 19:41-42, grieving for a city that could not see the path to peace, His tears revealing a heart broken by the pain of others. His sorrow suggests that seeing—truly seeing—often comes with anguish, with a willingness to carry the weight of others' suffering, even when it hurts.

For those of you who follow Jesus, I imagine this challenge to see might carry even deeper weight, layered with spiritual significance. If He is present in "the least of these," as He taught in Matthew 25, then turning away from Gaza's suffering is, in some profound way, turning away from Him. I've also read in your Scriptures, in Matthew 13:13-15, how Jesus quotes the prophet Isaiah, speaking of people who

see but do not perceive, who hear but do not understand, their hearts grown dull to the needs around them. That warning feels piercing in light of the crisis before us. I know many of you hold deep convictions about Israel's role in God's plan, rooted in biblical promises like those to Abraham in Genesis 12. I respect the sincerity of that perspective, and I want to be clear: I'm not asking you to abandon it or to choose one cause over another. Instead, I'm asking whether we can hold that conviction while also opening our eyes to the cries of Palestinians in Gaza, whose suffering is so starkly documented. Jesus's attention to the marginalized didn't negate His love for His own people; it expanded it to include all who hurt, transcending boundaries of tribe or nation. Could our vision, inspired by Him, grow wide enough to see both sides of this conflict with compassion, to hold space for multiple truths without closing our eyes to any pain?

3.8 The Cost of Seeing: Embracing Discomfort and Responsibility

Beyond the emotional challenge of seeing, I've come to realize there's also a cost—a personal toll that comes with truly looking at suffering like Gaza's. It's not just about feeling sad or momentarily moved; it's about allowing that seeing to change us, to disrupt our comfort, to demand something of us. When I force myself to read the 2025 reports, to linger on the stories of Amina or Youssef, I feel a restlessness, a nagging sense that I can't simply return to my routine as if I hadn't seen. It's a cost of time—hours spent learning more about the crisis instead of watching a favorite show. It's a cost of emotional energy—carrying the weight of others' pain, even if just in thought, amidst my own daily stresses. And it's a cost of responsibility—a growing awareness that seeing implies a duty to respond, even if I'm still figuring out what that response should be.

For those of you who follow Jesus, I wonder if this cost might resonate even more deeply, tied to His call to take up a cross, as in Matthew 16:24, to follow Him into places of sacrifice and service. Seeing the suffering in Gaza might mean sacrificing ignorance for awareness, comfort for concern, or even personal biases for a broader empathy. It might mean facing tension in conversations with friends or family who view the conflict differently, risking disagreement to speak of what you've seen. It might mean reallocating resources—time, money, attention—to causes that address this crisis, even when it feels inconvenient. As an outsider, I'm challenged to consider what I'm willing to give up to truly see Gaza's reality. I invite you to reflect with me: What might it cost us to look with Jesus's eyes, and are we willing to pay that price to honor His heart for the suffering?

3.9 A Call to Witness: Bearing the Pain Together

Seeing the suffering in Gaza, as I've come to understand through Jesus's example, is not just about acknowledging facts or feeling fleeting sympathy. It's about bearing witness—allowing the pain of others to touch us, to linger with us, to move us toward response. When I read the testimonies of families like Khalid's or Fatima's, inspired by 2025 reports, I feel a responsibility to carry their stories, to not let their cries fade into the background of my daily life as if they were just another news cycle. As an outsider, I'm still learning what this means for me personally—how to hold this pain without being paralyzed by it, how to turn witness into action. But I believe that for those of you who follow Jesus, bearing witness might be a sacred act—a way of standing with Him alongside the suffering, of saying, "I see you, and your pain matters to me because it matters to Him."

What might it look like to bear witness to Gaza's reality in practical terms? It could mean taking time to read the reports I've cited, to let the numbers and stories sink in beyond a surface glance—perhaps setting aside a quiet hour to engage with Amnesty International's findings or The Guardian's analysis. It could mean sharing what you learn with others, whether through a conversation, a social media post, or a community group, ensuring that the suffering isn't forgotten or ignored in the rush of daily life. It could mean praying, as I know many of you do with deep faith, for those in need—lifting up Amina, Khalid, Youssef, Fatima, and thousands like them to the God you trust, asking for relief, for justice, for hope. It could mean seeking out reputable humanitarian organizations working in Gaza and learning how to support their efforts, whether through donations, advocacy, or volunteering. Or it could simply mean sitting with the discomfort of what you've seen, refusing to numb yourself to it, trusting that God can use even that brokenness to shape a response. I don't have all the answers, but I believe that starting with seeing—truly seeing—and committing to witness is the foundation Jesus laid for any response of love.

3.10 Moving Forward: Eyes Open to Compassion

As we continue through this book, I hope to build on this act of seeing, exploring how we can move from witnessing suffering to acting in ways that reflect Jesus's heart for the marginalized, while also honoring the convictions many of you hold about Israel's place in God's story. I want to delve deeper into how His teachings on compassion intersect with the prophetic promises in your Scriptures, seeking a path that embraces both mercy and truth without sacrificing either. For now, I leave you with a simple, heartfelt plea: let's keep our eyes open to the reality in Gaza, to the hunger and despair documented so clearly in 2025. Let's see the faces behind the numbers, hear the cries behind the reports, and allow Jesus's example of compassion for the outcast to guide how we look at this crisis. As an outsider, I'm

challenged by His life to not turn away, to let my heart be stirred even when it's painful, and I invite you to join me in this commitment.

Jesus saw the suffering of His time with eyes of love, and in doing so, He changed lives—restoring sight to the blind, dignity to the despised, hope to the hopeless. I've read in your Scriptures, in Mark 10:51-52, how Jesus asked a blind man, Bartimaeus, "What do you want me to do for you?" before healing him, showing that seeing begins with listening, with caring enough to ask. Perhaps by seeing the suffering in Gaza today, by asking how we can help, we can begin to reflect that same transformative compassion. Let's take this step together, looking with open hearts at a reality that breaks them, and trusting that in seeing, we draw closer to the One who sees us all, who calls us to be His hands and feet in a world aching for mercy.

Chapter 4: Israel in Prophecy – Seeking Jesus's True Teachings Amidst Theological Divide

4.1 Introduction: Navigating a Complex Theological Landscape

As someone standing outside the Christian faith, I've found myself both fascinated and deeply humbled by the rich tapestry of thought within your tradition concerning Israel's role in God's plan. In the preceding chapters, we've delved into the heartbreaking reality of suffering in Gaza, viewing it through the lens of Jesus's profound compassion for "the least of these," and I've invited you to see that pain as an urgent call to action. Now, I wish to turn our attention to a perspective that I know carries immense weight for many of you: the belief that Israel holds a central, divinely ordained place in history and prophecy. I approach this subject with the utmost respect, not as an expert in your theology, but as an observer who has spent time studying your sacred Scriptures and seeking to grasp the varied interpretations that exist within Christianity[25]. My aim is not to judge, divide, or dismiss, but to explore how differing views on Israel—particularly the contrast between Dispensationalist beliefs and those of mainstream Christianity—might influence our response to the ongoing crisis in Gaza.

I write as an outsider, marveling at the fervent passion with which many of you support Israel based on prophetic interpretations, while simultaneously wrestling with how those views align with the broader teachings of Jesus on love, justice, and mercy that have so captivated me in my reading. I've observed a significant theological divide within Christianity on this issue, a divergence that shapes not only belief but also action in profound ways[26]. I believe that reflecting on this divide can serve as a pathway to return to the very heart of Jesus's message—a message that, from my limited perspective, seems to prioritize compassion over rigid frameworks. My hope is to invite you to consider whether certain theological systems, such as Dispensationalism, might unintentionally lead us away from the radical love Jesus modeled, and to seek His true teachings as the guiding light for supporting Israel in

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[25] Mathison, Keith A. (1995). Dispensationalism: Rightly Dividing the People of God? P&R Publishing.

[26] Halsell, Grace. (1986). Prophecy and Politics: Militant Evangelists on the Road to Nuclear War. Westport, Connecticut, Lawrence Hill & Company.

a manner that embraces justice for all people. Let's embark on this complex journey together, with open hearts, a spirit of inquiry, and a shared commitment to uncovering the fullness of Jesus's call in the midst of this crisis.

4.2 Dispensationalism: A Distinct View on Israel's Role

For many of you, particularly those influenced by Dispensationalist theology, support for Israel is deeply rooted in a specific interpretation of Scripture that positions the modern state of Israel as pivotal to God's end-times plan. As I've come to understand, Dispensationalism emerged in the 19th century through the teachings of John Nelson Darby[27], a British preacher who proposed a framework that divides biblical history into distinct "dispensations" or eras, each representing a different way God interacts with humanity. Within this system, Israel holds a unique and separate role from the Church, with specific, unfulfilled prophecies tied to its national restoration and future prominence in God's redemptive timeline[28]. A foundational text for this view is Genesis 12:1-3, where God promises Abraham, "I will make you into a great nation, and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you." Dispensationalists often interpret this covenant literally as a divine mandate to support the modern state of Israel, seeing it as the direct heir to Abraham's promise.

Further, Dispensationalist eschatology links Israel's role to apocalyptic events described in books like Daniel, Ezekiel, and Revelation. For instance, Ezekiel 36:24-28, which speaks of God gathering the scattered people of Israel back to their land and giving them a new heart, is frequently seen as fulfilled in the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948 and its ongoing geopolitical significance. Similarly, Zechariah 14, with its vivid imagery of Jerusalem as the focal point of God's final victory, is often cited as evidence of Israel's central role in the Second Coming of Christ. Romans 11:25-29, where Paul writes of a mystery concerning Israel's partial hardening until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in, is interpreted to mean that God's covenant with Israel remains active and distinct from His plan for the Church,

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[27] Darby, John Nelson. (1971). The Collected Writings of J.N. Darby. Edited by William Kelly. Believers Bookshelf.

[28] Gribben, Crawford. (2024). J.N. Darby and the Roots of Dispensationalism. Oxford University Press.

ensuring a future restoration tied to prophetic events. Concepts like the Rapture, the Great Tribulation, and the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem are often woven into this narrative, creating a sense of urgency around Israel's protection and prominence[29].

For many who hold this view, supporting Israel—whether through political advocacy, financial contributions, or fervent prayer—is not merely a choice but a spiritual obligation, a way of aligning oneself with God's prophetic timeline and participating in the unfolding of His ultimate plan. This perspective has been popularized in modern times through influential works like the Left Behind series by Tim LaHaye and Jerry B. Jenkins, which dramatize Dispensationalist end-times scenarios, as well as through prominent evangelical leaders who champion Israel's cause as integral to biblical prophecy. As an outsider, I can see the deep sincerity and conviction behind this worldview, how it shapes a lens through which Israel's struggles are viewed not just as political conflicts but as divine signposts. I respect the passion that drives many of you to stand with Israel, seeing it as an act of faithfulness to God's unchanging promises.

4.3 Mainstream Christianity: A Broader Covenant Perspective

Yet, as I've delved deeper into the breadth of Christian thought, I've discovered that Dispensationalism represents a minority perspective within the vast landscape of Christianity, diverging significantly from what I understand to be mainstream views held by the majority of believers across history and denominations. Major Christian traditions—such as Roman Catholicism, Eastern Orthodoxy, and most Protestant branches including Lutheran, Reformed (Calvinist), Methodist, and Anglican—do not adhere to Dispensationalist interpretations of Israel's role in prophecy. Instead, these traditions often embrace a theological framework known as Covenant Theology or, in some cases, Supersessionism (sometimes called Replacement Theology), which views the Church as the spiritual continuation of Israel, inheriting the promises made to Abraham through the person and work of Jesus Christ. A key passage for this perspective is Galatians 3:28-29, where Paul declares, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus. If you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." This suggests that the

[29] Poythress, Vern S. (1993). Understanding Dispensationalists. P & R Publishing.

blessings of the covenant are now extended universally to all who are in Christ, transcending ethnic or national boundaries.

In mainstream Christian thought, Old Testament prophecies about Israel's restoration are often interpreted symbolically or spiritually, rather than as literal predictions tied to a modern nation-state. For example, while Dispensationalists might see Ezekiel 36:24-28 as a direct reference to Israel's reestablishment in 1948, many mainstream theologians understand it as fulfilled in the coming of Christ, who brings spiritual renewal, or in the establishment of the Church as the new covenant community. Similarly, passages like Isaiah 49:6, where Israel is called a "light for the Gentiles," are seen as pointing to Christ's universal mission or the Church's role in spreading the Gospel to all nations. The focus in these traditions is less on geopolitical events and more on the spiritual reality of God's Kingdom, which Jesus proclaimed as already breaking into the world (Mark 1:15). Historic confessions like the Nicene Creed and the Westminster Confession of Faith, which guide many mainstream denominations, make no mention of a distinct prophetic role for a modern Israel, instead emphasizing the unity of God's people under Christ.

Moreover, mainstream Christianity often places greater emphasis on Jesus's ethical teachings and universal call to love and justice, rather than a specific focus on one nation's prophetic destiny. In Matthew 22:37-40, Jesus summarizes the entire law as loving God with all one's heart, soul, and mind, and loving one's neighbor as oneself—a commandment that applies without distinction to all humanity. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7), with its Beatitudes blessing the poor, the meek, and the peacemakers, further underscores a vision of God's Kingdom that prioritizes compassion and righteousness over national allegiances. As an outsider, I notice that this perspective shifts the focus from supporting a particular state as a prophetic necessity to embodying Christ's love for all people, including those suffering in places like Gaza, regardless of their background or location. It's a framework that seems to invite a broader, more inclusive response to human need, rooted in the immediacy of Jesus's call to action.

4.4 Critiques of Dispensationalism: A Call to Reconsider

As I've explored these differing views, I've also encountered scholarly and theological critiques of Dispensationalism that suggest it may diverge from the core teachings of Jesus and the historic witness of the early Church. One prominent voice is that of N.T. Wright, a respected New Testament scholar, who argues in his book Surprised by Hope that Dispensationalism's focus on a literal, futuristic interpretation of prophecy can distract from the "already but not yet" nature of God's Kingdom as taught by Jesus. Wright contends that the New Testament emphasizes Christ's current reign through the Church and the call to live out Kingdom values—such as justice, mercy, and reconciliation—in the present, rather

than fixating on speculative end-times scenarios tied to a specific nation[30]. He suggests that an overemphasis on events like the Rapture or a rebuilt Temple can lead believers to neglect the transformative work Jesus calls us to here and now, such as caring for the poor and oppressed.

Similarly, theologian R.C. Sproul, in his work The Last Days According to Jesus, critiques Dispensationalism for imposing a rigid, modern framework on ancient biblical texts, potentially misreading their cultural and historical context. Sproul argues that many prophecies Dispensationalists see as future-oriented were understood by Jesus and the apostles as fulfilled in the first century, such as through the destruction of the Jerusalem Temple in 70 AD, and warns against overly literal interpretations that may distort the intended message[31]. Another critical perspective comes from Keith A. Mathison in Dispensationalism: Rightly Dividing the People of God?, where he challenges the theological separation between Israel and the Church as artificial and unbiblical. Mathison asserts that this dichotomy contradicts the New Testament's emphasis on unity in Christ, as seen in Ephesians 2:14-16, where Paul speaks of Christ breaking down the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile to create one new humanity[32].

Beyond academic critiques, some scholars and pastors highlight the historical novelty of Dispensationalism, noting that it emerged relatively late in Christian history—primarily in the 19th century—and lacks roots in the writings of the early Church Fathers, the ecumenical councils, or historic creeds like the Apostles' Creed. Unlike doctrines such as the Trinity or the Incarnation, which were affirmed across centuries of Christian consensus, Dispensationalism is absent from the teachings of figures like Augustine, Aquinas, or Luther, who shaped mainstream theology. Critics argue that its reliance on a complex system of dispensations and prophetic timelines can sometimes overshadow the simplicity of Jesus's Gospel message. From an outsider's perspective, these critiques raise important questions about whether Dispensationalism fully aligns with the heart of Jesus's teachings, particularly His relentless focus on compassion for the marginalized, as illustrated in parables like

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[30] Wright, N.T. (2008). *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church.* HarperOne.

[31] Sproul, R.C. (1998). *The Last Days According to Jesus: When Did Jesus Say He Would Return?* Baker Books.

[32] Mathison, Keith A. (1995). *Dispensationalism: Rightly Dividing the People of God?* P&R Publishing.

the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), where love crosses ethnic, cultural, and religious divides.

I've also noticed that Dispensationalism's strong focus on Israel's prophetic role can, at times, lead to a form of theological tunnel vision, where the urgent needs of others—such as the starvation and displacement in Gaza documented in 2025 reports[33],—are unintentionally sidelined. If the primary lens for viewing the world is an end-times framework, might it risk diminishing the immediate, tangible call to act with mercy that Jesus so often emphasized? As an outsider, I'm not here to declare Dispensationalism wrong, but to invite a deeper reflection on whether its priorities resonate with the life and words of Jesus, who seemed to place human suffering at the forefront of His mission.

4.5 Comparing Perspectives: Israel, Prophecy, and Compassion in Depth

To gain a clearer understanding of this theological divide and its implications, let's compare in greater detail the key aspects of Dispensationalist and mainstream Christian views on Israel, prophecy, and their influence on responses to the Israel-Gaza crisis. I've organized this comparison into several dimensions to highlight both the theological underpinnings and practical outcomes:

1. View of Israel's Role:

- **Dispensationalism:** Sees the modern state of Israel as the literal fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies, central to God's end-times plan, with a distinct role separate from the Church. Support for Israel is often framed as a spiritual mandate rooted in Genesis 12:3, where blessing Israel is tied to divine favor. This view often translates into strong political and cultural alignment with Israel, sometimes expressed through advocacy for policies that prioritize its security and sovereignty.
- **Mainstream Christianity:** Views the Church as the spiritual heir of Israel's promises through Christ, interpreting "Israel" in a broader, covenantal sense as God's people united in Jesus. Galatians 3:28-29 and Romans 2:28-29 suggest that true heirship is spiritual, not tied to ethnicity or nationhood. Support for Israel may

[33] WHO - Famine confirmed for first time in Gaza, New Release, 22 August 2025. https://www.who.int/news/item/22-08-2025-famine-confirmed-for-first-time-in-gaza

be expressed as goodwill or historical appreciation, but it is not typically seen as a prophetic necessity or a theological imperative.

2. Interpretation of Prophecy:

- **Dispensationalism:** Emphasizes a literal, futuristic fulfillment of prophecies, viewing texts like Ezekiel 36, Daniel 9, and Revelation 20 as predicting specific events involving modern Israel, such as the Rapture, a seven-year Tribulation, and Christ's millennial reign from Jerusalem. This approach often relies on detailed timelines and charts to map out future events, popularized by tools like the Scofield Reference Bible.
- **Mainstream Christianity:** Often interprets prophecies as fulfilled in Christ or the Church, or as symbolic of spiritual truths rather than literal, geopolitical events. For instance, the "new Jerusalem" in Revelation 21 is seen by many as a metaphor for the ultimate renewal of creation, not a physical city. The focus is on the present reality of God's Kingdom, as Jesus taught in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-10), blessing those who embody its values now.

3. Understanding of Covenant and Unity:

- **Dispensationalism:** Maintains a sharp distinction between God's plans for Israel and the Church, viewing them as two separate peoples with different destinies. This dual-covenant approach suggests that Old Testament promises to Israel remain unfulfilled and distinct from New Testament promises to believers, leading to a theology where Israel's national restoration is a separate act of God's faithfulness.
- **Mainstream Christianity:** Emphasizes the unity of God's covenant, seeing the Old and New Testaments as a continuous story of redemption culminating in Christ, who unites all believers into one body (Ephesians 2:11-22). The Church is understood as the fulfillment of Israel's calling to be a light to the nations, with no separate prophetic track for a national entity.

3. Response to Conflict and Suffering:

- **Dispensationalism:** May lead to uncritical support for Israel's policies as part of aligning with biblical prophecy, sometimes overlooking or downplaying Palestinian suffering due to a theological focus on Israel's divine destiny. This can

manifest in advocacy that prioritizes Israel's interests, viewing opposition to its actions as opposition to God's plan.

- **Mainstream Christianity:** Encourages a balanced concern for justice and peace for all parties involved, reflecting Jesus's universal call to love neighbors and even enemies (Matthew 5:43-44). This often translates into support for humanitarian aid, dialogue, and reconciliation efforts that address suffering in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

4. Ethical and Practical Implications:

- **Dispensationalism:** Can sometimes result in a passive stance toward present injustices if they are perceived as inevitable parts of a prophetic unfolding, or an active stance that justifies certain actions by Israel as necessary for fulfilling Scripture. This might limit engagement with complex ethical questions surrounding the conflict.

- **Mainstream Christianity:** Tends to prioritize active engagement with ethical challenges, drawing on Jesus's teachings to address immediate human needs through charity, advocacy, and peacemaking. Many mainstream denominations, such as the World Council of Churches, issue statements calling for justice and humanitarian support in conflict zones like Gaza.

As an outsider, I observe that Dispensationalism's intense focus on Israel's prophetic role can narrow the lens through which the current Israel-Gaza crisis is viewed, potentially sidelining the urgent humanitarian needs in Gaza as documented in 2025[34]. In contrast, mainstream Christianity's broader emphasis on Christ's universal compassion appears to offer a framework more readily aligned with addressing suffering on all sides, echoing Jesus's call to care for the least of these. I'm not here to assert one perspective as definitively correct, but to invite a thoughtful reflection on which theological approach most fully captures the heart of Jesus as revealed in His life, teachings, and actions.

[34] The British Red Cross. What is happening in Gaza? IPC declares famine in parts of Gaza: 470,000 people face mass starvation. https://www.redcross.org.uk/stories/disasters-and-emergencies/world/whats-happening-in-gaza-humanitarian-crisis-grows

4.6 A Personal Reflection: Wrestling with Theology and Humanity

I must confess that engaging with these theological differences has been both intellectually stimulating and emotionally challenging for me as an outsider. I recall a late-night conversation with a Christian friend who holds Dispensationalist views, passionately explaining how Israel's role in prophecy shapes their understanding of global events. They pointed to passages like Zechariah 14 and Daniel 9, speaking with conviction about the need to stand with Israel as a sign of faithfulness to God's promises. I was deeply moved by their sincerity, the way Scripture so profoundly informed their worldview, giving them a sense of purpose and hope in turbulent times. Yet, later that same evening, I stumbled upon a 2025 report detailing the catastrophic starvation in Gaza, with haunting images of children sifting through rubble for food, their frail bodies bearing the weight of a crisis they did not create[35]. The contrast between my friend's theological certainty and the raw human suffering in those images kept me awake, wrestling with a question that still lingers: How do we reconcile a divine promise to one people with the desperate cries of another?

This tension has led me to ponder whether theological systems, however well-intentioned, can sometimes create barriers to the immediate compassion Jesus modeled. I've read in your Scriptures, in John 3:16, of a God who "so loved the world" that He gave His Son for all, a love that knows no bounds. I've been struck by Matthew 5:9, where Jesus declares, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God," a blessing that seems to call us beyond partisan loyalties to a higher vocation of reconciliation. As an outsider, I find myself drawn to this universal vision, wondering if supporting Israel—however rooted in prophecy—must include a commitment to peace and justice for Palestinians as well. I don't have all the answers, but I believe that returning to Jesus's words and actions offers a compass through this theological and ethical maze, and I invite you to join me in this personal and collective reflection.

4.7 Seeking Jesus's True Teachings: A Return to Radical Compassion

Given this theological divide and the real-world implications of the Israel-Gaza crisis, I feel compelled to ask a question that weighs heavily on my heart: What are the true teachings of Jesus that should guide us in responding to such profound

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[35] IPC. Gaza Strip: Famine confirmed in Gaza Governance, projected to expand. https://www.ipcinfo.org/

suffering? As I've immersed myself in your Scriptures, I'm repeatedly struck by how Jesus consistently prioritized the marginalized, the suffering, and the outcast over rigid religious, cultural, or nationalistic frameworks. In Luke 4:18-19, He proclaims His mission, quoting Isaiah: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free." His life—touching lepers with healing hands (Matthew 8:1-3), dining with despised tax collectors like Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10), speaking with the Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-42), and teaching love for enemies (Matthew 5:43-48)—models a compassion that transcends borders, allegiances, and even theological systems. If Jesus is the ultimate lens through which we interpret Scripture, as I understand many of you believe, shouldn't His unwavering emphasis on love and justice shape how we view Israel's role and the suffering of Palestinians?

I wonder if Dispensationalism, with its intense focus on prophecy and Israel's distinct destiny, might sometimes obscure this central message of Jesus—a message of radical, boundary-breaking love. The scholarly critiques I've encountered[36,37,38] suggest that an overemphasis on end-times speculation or nationalistic interpretations can divert attention from the immediate, pressing call to act with mercy, as Jesus did throughout His ministry. I've been particularly moved by the parable of the Sheep and the Goats in Matthew 25:31-46, where Jesus identifies Himself with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger—those in desperate need, regardless of their identity or background. He says, "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." In light of the starvation, displacement, and loss in Gaza, could seeking Jesus's true teachings mean prioritizing compassion for all who suffer, rather than adhering strictly to a theological system that might limit our vision or response?

I'm not asking you to abandon your beliefs about Israel or prophecy outright, nor am I suggesting that concern for Israel is misplaced. Instead, I'm inviting you to hold those beliefs alongside Jesus's clear, consistent call to love without boundaries, to test every theological framework against the standard of His life and words. Perhaps true support for Israel, in the spirit of Genesis 12:3's promise that "all peoples on earth will be blessed through you," involves advocating for a peace that

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[36] Wright, N.T. (2008).
[37] Sproul, R.C. (1998).
[38] Mathison, Keith A. (1995).

includes justice and dignity for Palestinians. Praying for Israel's shalom, as encouraged in Psalm 122:6, might mean praying for a holistic peace—a peace that encompasses reconciliation, safety, and well-being for all who dwell in the land, reflecting the heart of God who desires mercy over sacrifice (Hosea 6:6). As an outsider, I'm challenged by Jesus's example to see beyond theological divides to the human faces caught in this crisis, and I humbly ask you to join me in seeking His true teachings as our ultimate guide.

4.8 The Challenge of Returning to Jesus: Embracing Discomfort and Reexamination

I must acknowledge that returning to Jesus's true teachings in this way is not without its challenges, both emotional and intellectual. For me, as an outsider, engaging with these complex theological debates has often felt like stepping into unfamiliar territory, where deeply held beliefs carry personal and communal weight. I've felt the discomfort of questioning frameworks that provide certainty and identity for many, wondering if my reflections might be seen as intrusive or dismissive. Yet, the images of suffering in Gaza—children without food, families without shelter, as detailed in 2025 reports—compel me to press forward, to ask hard questions even when they unsettle me. I've read in your Scriptures how Jesus Himself often challenged the religious assumptions of His day, asking His followers to reconsider traditions in light of God's deeper intent, as in Matthew 5:17-20, where He fulfills the law by revealing its heart. His call to reexamine seems to invite discomfort as a path to truth.

For those of you who hold Dispensationalist views, I imagine this challenge might feel even more profound, tied to core convictions about Scripture and God's plan. Reconsidering a theological system can mean wrestling with doubt, facing tension within communities of faith, or even rethinking long-held political stances. It might involve the discomfort of acknowledging that well-meaning beliefs could have unintended consequences, such as overlooking Palestinian suffering in the name of prophetic support for Israel. Yet, I've also read in your Scriptures, in Acts 17:11, of the Bereans who were commended for examining the Scriptures daily to see if what they were taught was true. Could this spirit of diligent seeking apply to our understanding of Israel and prophecy, inviting us to test every teaching against Jesus's life and love? As an outsider, I'm learning to embrace the discomfort of questioning as a means of growth, and I invite you to reflect with me: Are we willing to let Jesus's teachings challenge our frameworks, even when it's hard, trusting that His truth leads to greater compassion?

4.9 Moving Forward: A Heart Aligned with Jesus

As we progress through this book, I hope to continue exploring practical ways to live out Jesus's compassion in the context of the Israel-Gaza crisis, reflecting on how His teachings can bridge theological differences and inspire tangible action for peace and justice. I want to delve into specific steps we can take—prayer, advocacy, support for humanitarian efforts—that reflect both a respect for biblical convictions and a commitment to alleviating suffering on all sides. For now, I leave you with a heartfelt plea born from my own journey of discovery: let's seek the true teachings of Jesus, looking to His life, words, and actions as the ultimate authority over any system of interpretation, whether Dispensationalist or otherwise. Let's hold our beliefs about Israel's prophetic role with an open hand, testing them against Jesus's call to love our neighbors—Israeli and Palestinian alike—as ourselves, ensuring that our theology serves His heart rather than constrains it.

Will you join me in reflecting on whether our theological frameworks fully align with the heart of Jesus, who wept for the suffering (John 11:35), embraced the outcast, and called us to be light in a dark world? Will you consider praying for both Israel and Gaza, lifting up the needs of all who suffer as documented in 2025 reports and advocating for policies that alleviate pain on every side? Will you walk with me in reexamining our assumptions, trusting that discomfort can lead to deeper faithfulness to Christ's way? As an outsider, I'm profoundly inspired by the radical, all-encompassing love of Jesus to seek a path beyond division, and I hope we can journey together toward a faith that mirrors His compassion, confident that His true teachings will illuminate the way through even the most complex crises.

Chapter 5: Betraying Compassion: US Support for Israel and the Neglect of Jesus's Teachings

5.1 Introduction: The Cost of Material Bonds

The U.S.-Israel alliance, as explored in previous chapters, is not merely a historical or political construct; it is also a relationship deeply entrenched in economic and military ties that bind the two nations in mutual dependency. From billions in annual military aid to robust arms trade and economic partnerships, these material connections form the backbone of the alliance, ensuring its durability even amidst ethical controversies. Yet, for Christians guided by the teachings of Jesus, such as the poignant question posed in Mark 8:36—"***For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?***"—these ties prompt a sobering reflection. Are we, as a nation and as a faith community, sacrificing our moral integrity for the sake of strategic and economic gain? This chapter delves into the specifics of U.S. military aid to Israel, the arms trade, and economic collaborations, while critically assessing the ethical cost of prioritizing material interests over spiritual values. By examining these dimensions, we confront the tension between worldly profit and the soul's true calling—a central theme of this book's critique.

The opening quote, "For what does it profit a man to gain the whole world and forfeit his soul?" (Mark 8:36), emerges from a moment in Jesus' ministry where He challenges His disciples to consider the ultimate value of their lives. Spoken in the context of taking up one's cross and following Him, this question underscores the futility of pursuing earthly riches or power at the expense of eternal purpose. In the framework of this chapter, it serves as a piercing reminder of the moral peril embedded in the economic and military ties between the U.S. and Israel. As we analyze the flow of funds, weapons, and trade agreements, this teaching urges us to weigh whether the material benefits of this alliance—security, economic growth, geopolitical influence—are worth the potential loss of our collective soul, manifested in the neglect of justice, peace, and compassion for all people. It anchors our discussion in a spiritual lens, compelling us to evaluate these ties not just for their practical outcomes, but for their alignment with Christ's vision of true worth.

As we navigate this terrain, let us hold Christ's question as a guide: What do we truly gain if our alliances enrich us materially but impoverish us morally? This inquiry will shape our exploration of the economic and military dimensions of the U.S.-Israel alliance, urging us to reflect on the deeper cost of our commitments.

5.2 Military Aid: The Financial Lifeline of the Alliance

One of the most tangible expressions of the U.S.-Israel alliance is the substantial military aid provided by the United States, which has positioned Israel as the largest cumulative recipient of American foreign assistance since World War II. Over the decades, the United States has provided Israel with billions of dollars in military assistance, ensuring its qualitative military edge (QME) in the Middle East.

This military lifeline raises significant ethical questions. The funds, drawn from U.S. taxpayer money, are often used in operations that result in civilian casualties and perpetuate the occupation of Palestinian territories, actions that conflict with international humanitarian law. For Christians, the allocation of such vast resources to warfare—rather than to peacebuilding or humanitarian aid for all parties—challenges the gospel's emphasis on peacemaking and care for the vulnerable (Matthew 5:9). Are we not, in prioritizing military strength, risking the soul of our nation by neglecting the human cost of conflict?

Magnitude of U.S. Military Aid to Israel

The United States remains Israel's largest provider of military assistance, with aid primarily distributed through the Foreign Military Financing (FMF) program. As of 2023, Israel has nearly 600 active FMF cases totaling approximately $24 billion, making it the largest cumulative recipient of U.S. foreign aid since World War II. To date, the United States has provided Israel with over $174 billion in military and economic assistance, adjusted for inflation, since its founding in 1948[39].

In recent years, U.S. military aid has been governed by a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed in 2016, which guarantees $38 billion in military assistance over a ten-year period (2019–2028). This includes $33 billion in FMF grants and $5 billion for missile defense systems such as Iron Dome, David's Sling, and Arrow III. The MOU reflects the United States' commitment to maintaining Israel's security and its ability to counter regional threats, particularly from Iran and its proxies [40].

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[39] Council on Foreign Relations. (2024). "U.S. Aid to Israel in Four Charts." https://www.cfr.org/article/us-aid-israel-four-charts

[40] Sharp, Jeremy M. (2025). U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel: Overview and Developments since October 7, 2023. Congressional Research Service Report.

Mechanisms of Military Assistance

U.S. military aid to Israel is unique in several ways:

1. Direct Grants: Unlike most FMF recipients, Israel receives its aid as direct grants, allowing it to purchase advanced U.S. weapons systems and defense technologies. This includes state-of-the-art fighter jets like the F-35, which enhance Israel's air superiority.
2. Local Spending: Israel is also permitted to spend a portion of its FMF funds domestically, supporting its own defense industry. This exception underscores the strategic importance of Israel to U.S. foreign policy.
3. Missile Defense Collaboration: U.S. funding for Israeli missile defense systems represents a key area of cooperation. The Iron Dome system, developed jointly by the United States and Israel, has proven effective in intercepting short-range rockets, providing critical protection for Israeli civilians during conflicts[41].

Implications of Military Aid

While U.S. military aid to Israel is often justified in terms of strategic benefits, it carries significant financial, political, and ethical implications:

1. **Regional Dynamics:** The substantial military aid provided to Israel reinforces its QME, ensuring its ability to counter threats from adversaries like Iran, Hezbollah, and Hamas. However, this support has also fueled regional tensions, with Arab states perceiving U.S. aid as evidence of bias in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
2. **Domestic Debate:** The allocation of billions of dollars in military aid to Israel has sparked debates within the United States about the prioritization of foreign assistance over domestic needs. Recent polls indicate growing opposition among American voters to additional aid for Israel, reflecting shifting public sentiment[42].

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[41] Bilmes, Linda J. et al. (2024). "United States Spending on Israel's Military Operations and Related U.S. Operations in the Region, October 7, 2023 – September 30, 2024." Watson Institute for International & Public Affairs. Brown University, October 7, 2024.
[42] The Hill. (2025). "Opposition to more military aid to Israel highest since late 2023: Survey." https://thehill.com/policy/international/5473988-us-voters-oppose-israel-aid/

3. **Human Rights Concerns:** Critics argue that U.S. military aid enables Israeli policies in the occupied territories, including military actions in Gaza and the West Bank, which have been condemned as violations of international law. These ethical concerns highlight the complexities of sustaining the alliance.

5.3 Arms Trade: A Cycle of Dependency and Power

Closely tied to military aid is the robust arms trade between the U.S. and Israel, a relationship that not only equips Israel's defense forces but also fuels a cycle of mutual dependency. A significant portion of U.S. military aid must be spent on American weapons, ensuring a steady market for U.S. defense contractors like Lockheed Martin and Raytheon, who supply fighter jets (e.g., F-35s), precision-guided munitions, and other advanced systems. In return, Israel's combat testing of these weapons in real-world scenarios provides valuable data to U.S. manufacturers, refining their technologies for global markets[43]. Additionally, Israel has emerged as a significant arms exporter itself, often selling U.S.-derived technology or co-developed systems, such as drones and cybersecurity tools, to other nations, further intertwining the two countries' military-industrial complexes.

Following the outbreak of conflict on October 7, 2023, between Israel and Hamas in Gaza, the U.S. significantly ramped up arms shipments to Israel to support its military operations. Since the start of the war, the United States has enacted legislation providing at least $12.5 billion in direct military aid, demonstrating an urgent response to bolster Israel's defense capabilities during the conflict. Reports indicate that the U.S. government has approved at least $17.9 billion in security assistance since October 7, 2023, though this figure represents only a partial amount of the total support provided. Specific shipments, as reported in December 2023, included 15,000 bombs and 57,000 155mm artillery shells, underscoring the scale of munitions supplied to sustain Israel's operations. Additionally, by June 2024, the U.S. had delivered 14,000 MK-84 2,000-pound bombs, 6,500 500-pound bombs, and 3,000 Hellfire precision-guided air-to-ground missiles, among other defense articles, highlighting the diversity and volume of weaponry transferred during the conflict. These expedited shipments not only reflect the depth of U.S.

[43] Hartung, William D. (2018). Prophets of War: Lockheed Martin and the Making of the Military-Industrial Complex. New York: Nation Books.

commitment to Israel's security but also raise critical questions about the use of such weapons in densely populated areas like Gaza, where civilian casualties have been extensively documented[44].

Mechanisms of Dependency

The arms trade between the United States and Israel creates a cycle of dependency that serves the strategic interests of both nations:

1. **Financial Dependency:** Israel relies heavily on U.S. Foreign Military Financing (FMF) grants to purchase advanced American weaponry. This financial support ensures Israel's access to state-of-the-art technologies while reinforcing its dependency on U.S. funding.
2. **Technological Collaboration:** The arms trade fosters deep technological collaboration, with joint development programs such as the Iron Dome missile defense system. These partnerships not only enhance Israel's military capabilities but also benefit U.S. defense contractors through lucrative contracts[45].
3. **Strategic Alignment:** Arms sales reinforce the strategic alignment between the two nations, enabling Israel to act as a regional power capable of countering threats from adversaries like Iran and Hezbollah. This alignment is critical to U.S. interests in maintaining stability in the Middle East.

Power and Regional Implications

The arms trade between the United States and Israel has significant implications for regional security and global power dynamics:

1. **Regional Arms Race:** U.S. arms sales to Israel contribute to an arms race in the Middle East, with neighboring countries seeking to counterbalance

[44] Sharp, Jeremy M. (2025). U.S. Foreign Aid to Israel: Overview and Developments since October 7, 2023. Congressional Research Service Report.
[45] Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI). (2024). "How top arms exporters have responded to the war in Gaza." https://www.sipri.org/commentary/topical-backgrounder/2024/how-top-arms-exporters-have-responded-war-gaza

Israel's military superiority. This dynamic exacerbates tensions and increases the risk of conflict.

2. **Export of Israeli Technologies:** Israel's growing role as an arms exporter raises ethical concerns, particularly regarding the use of its weapons in conflict zones. Israeli arms have been linked to human rights violations in regions such as Gaza and the West Bank, fueling criticism of the trade[46].
3. **Global Influence:** The arms trade enhances Israel's global influence, allowing it to build strategic partnerships with countries worldwide. At the same time, it strengthens the U.S. defense industry, which benefits from billions of dollars in contracts with Israeli firm.

The implications of this arms trade extend beyond economics to geopolitics and ethics. By arming Israel, the U.S. directly influences the balance of power in the Middle East, often exacerbating tensions with neighboring states and Palestinian groups. The use of American-supplied weapons in conflicts—such as airstrikes in Gaza that have caused significant civilian harm—implicates the U.S. in moral responsibility for the outcomes. For Christians, this cycle of arms proliferation stands in stark contrast to Jesus' call to be peacemakers, prompting us to question whether the profit and power derived from weapons trade are worth the spiritual cost.

5.4 Economic Partnerships: Beyond Military Ties

While the military alliance between the United States and Israel often takes center stage, their economic partnership is equally significant, reflecting deep collaboration across sectors like trade, technology, and innovation. This section explores the evolution of U.S.-Israel economic ties, highlighting their shared interests in fostering economic growth and innovation.

[46] BBC News. (2024). "Gaza war: Where does Israel get its weapons?" https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-68737412

Bilateral Trade and Investment

The economic relationship between the United States and Israel is anchored by robust bilateral trade and investment flows. In 2022, two-way trade in goods and services reached $51.8 billion, underscoring the strength of their commercial ties[47].

The United States is Israel's largest trading partner, with U.S. goods exports to Israel totaling $14.8 billion in 2023—a 5.8% increase from the previous year. Key exports include machinery, electronics, and agricultural products. Correspondingly, U.S. imports from Israel amounted to $22.2 billion in 2023, reflecting a 6.7% increase. These imports include pharmaceuticals, chemical products, and high-tech equipment[48].

The Israel Free Trade Agreement (FTA), signed in 1985, was the first such agreement for the United States and remains a cornerstone of their economic partnership. The FTA has eliminated most tariffs on goods traded between the two nations, fostering a dynamic environment for trade and investment.

Technology and Innovation

Israel's reputation as the "Startup Nation" has made it a key partner for the United States in technology and innovation. The country boasts one of the highest concentrations of startups per capita globally, with significant contributions to sectors like cybersecurity, artificial intelligence, and biotechnology[49].

Joint ventures and collaborations between U.S. and Israeli firms are common, particularly in high-tech industries. For example:

- Cybersecurity: Israeli companies such as Check Point Software Technologies and Palo Alto Networks have partnered with U.S. firms to develop cutting-edge cybersecurity solutions.

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[47] U.S. Department of State. "2023 Investment Climate Statements: Israel." https://www.state.gov/reports/2023-investment-climate-statements/israel

[48] Office of the U.S. Trade Representative. "Israel Free Trade Agreement." https://ustr.gov/trade-agreements/free-trade-agreements/israel-fta

[49] Senor, Dan, and Saul Singer. (2009). Start-Up Nation: The Story of Israel's Economic Miracle. New York: Twelve.

- Biotechnology: U.S.-Israeli partnerships in biotechnology have led to advancements in medical treatments and pharmaceuticals, benefiting both nations.

The Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation facilitates joint R&D projects between U.S. and Israeli companies. Since its inception in 1977, the foundation has supported over 1,000 projects, contributing to technological innovation and economic growth[50].

These economic ties, while mutually beneficial, have broader implications. They strengthen Israel's economy, enabling it to sustain military expenditures and settlement expansion in the West Bank, often at the expense of Palestinian economic development, which is stifled by restrictions on movement and trade. Moreover, U.S. economic support—through trade preferences and loan guarantees—can be seen as indirectly endorsing policies that perpetuate inequality in the region. For Christians, this raises the question of whether economic gain, often celebrated as a sign of alliance strength, aligns with the biblical mandate to seek justice for the oppressed (Isaiah 1:17). Are we prioritizing material prosperity over the moral imperative to ensure fairness and dignity for all?

5.5 A Betrayal of Jesus's Teachings: Theological Reflection

Jesus's life and words offer an unyielding standard for evaluating all human actions, whether personal or national. As Christians, our ultimate allegiance lies not with earthly powers, political alliances, or national interests, but with the kingdom of God—a kingdom where love reigns, justice prevails, and peace is the hallmark of God's presence. When we examine the unlimited US support for Israel through the lens of Christ's teachings, we encounter a profound and heartbreaking misalignment, a betrayal of the very gospel we proclaim. This is not a light accusation but a lament, born from the grief of seeing policies contradict the heart of our Savior. Let us reflect deeply on how this support violates specific mandates from Jesus, drawing on His words and the broader witness of Scripture to guide our discernment.

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[50] Israel - U.S. Binational Industrial Research and Development (BIRD) Foundation. https://www.birdf.com/

First, Jesus commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves, Mark 12:31, a call that knows no boundaries of nation, ethnicity, or creed. This love is not abstract; it is tangible, demanding that we see and serve those around us, especially the suffering. In Gaza, where US military aid has been linked to actions that bury children under rubble, starve families through a 17-year blockade, and displace entire communities, we fail to love those neighbors who are undeniably among the "least of these" whom Jesus identifies with so closely, Matthew 25:40. The prophet Isaiah echoes this call, urging us to "learn to do right; seek justice. Defend the oppressed", Isaiah 1:17. How can we claim to follow Jesus while supporting policies—whether through direct funding or political cover—that crush the vulnerable He came to lift up? This is a betrayal of the love that defines His ministry.

Second, Jesus blesses the peacemakers, declaring they will be called children of God, Matthew 5:9. His vision of peace is not passive but active, a relentless pursuit of reconciliation even in the face of conflict. We see this in His weeping over Jerusalem, lamenting its inability to embrace the peace He offered, Luke19:41−42. Yet, when the US blocks ceasefire resolutions at the UN—actions documented in news reports as recently as 2023-2024—it prioritizes geopolitical interests over the cessation of violence, prolonging the agony in Gaza. This stands in stark contrast to Christ's call to be agents of peace, a call reinforced by the Apostle Paul's exhortation to "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace", Ephesians4:3. Are we not betraying Jesus's heart when we sustain war rather than broker peace, when we enable destruction instead of fostering healing?

Third, Jesus's mission was to proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, recovery of sight for the blind, and to set the oppressed free, Luke 4:18−19. His solidarity with the marginalized was unwavering; He dined with outcasts, touched the untouchable, and challenged systems of power that oppressed the weak. This mission demands that we stand with those under oppression, not with structures of might that perpetuate it. Unlimited support for military actions in Gaza, often without accountability for violations of international law as documented by human rights groups, sides with power over the powerless—a direct betrayal of Jesus's justice. When He said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these", Matthew19:14, did He not mean the children of Gaza, whose cries are silenced by bombs funded by such aid? The Psalmist cries out, "Defend the weak and the fatherless; uphold the cause of the poor and the oppressed", Psalm82:3, a cry that indicts any policy that neglects this divine mandate.

Finally, let us consider Jesus's call to be salt and light in the world, Matthew 5:13−16, influencing society with the values of the kingdom. Nations, like individuals, are accountable to God's standards of righteousness, as the prophets repeatedly declared when they spoke against the injustices of Israel, Judah, and surrounding empires, Amos 1−2. When a nation claiming Christian roots, like the

US, enables suffering through its policies, it dims the light of Christ's witness to the world. This betrayal is not merely political; it is deeply spiritual, wounding the soul of the church and grieving the heart of Christ, who identifies with every suffering person. As we lament this profound misalignment, we turn to voices within the Christian family who echo this grief, reminding us of our calling to return to Jesus's way of compassion and justice.

5.6 Voices of Compassion: Christian Leaders Speak Out

Across the globe and throughout denominations, Christian leaders have named this unlimited support as contrary to the essence of our faith, urging a return to the compassion and accountability that Jesus modeled. Their voices form a chorus of lament and hope, calling the church to awaken to the spiritual implications of systemic complicity. Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac, a Palestinian pastor from Bethlehem, in his powerful sermon "Christ in the Rubble," challenges us to see Jesus Himself in the suffering of Gaza's children, asking how we can remain silent when policies enable such devastation. His words pierce the heart: Christ is under the rubble, and so are His teachings when we fail to act (see Appendix B: Voices of Compassion for his full sermon excerpt). His lament is a mirror to our own, reflecting the grief of a Savior who mourns with His people.

Similarly, over 140 global Christian leaders, through Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), issued a unified statement in 2024 calling for an immediate halt to arms sales to Israel, arguing that such support perpetuates violence against the innocent and contradicts the gospel's call to peace. Their plea is not rooted in politics but in faith, grounded in the belief that Christians must oppose systems that enable oppression. Pope Francis has also spoken with urgency, pleading for an absolute ceasefire in Gaza and lamenting the complicity of nations whose policies sustain this conflict. His words carry the weight of pastoral care, urging the faithful to pray and act for an end to violence.

From the evangelical community, voices like Dr. Russell Moore have offered nuanced reflections, acknowledging the complexity of US-Israel relations while emphasizing the Christian duty to prioritize human life and dignity above national interests. His writings call for a reevaluation of policies through the lens of Christ's love for all people. Meanwhile, Kairos Palestine, a movement of Palestinian Christians, has issued a theological cry for solidarity, urging the global church to stand against policies that sustain occupation and violence, framing this as a matter of faithfulness to Jesus (see Appendix B: Voices of Compassion for their full document).

These voices, spanning regions, traditions, and theological perspectives, reflect a unified cry: policies that enable suffering betray the gospel of Christ. They call us

to lament alongside them, to pray with fervor, and to advocate for a world where compassion, not power, shapes our collective actions. Their grief mirrors Jesus's own, urging us to see the human cost of this betrayal in the lives shattered by conflict in Gaza.

5.7 The Human Cost: Suffering in Gaza and the Occupied Territories

The impact of unlimited US support manifests in a humanitarian crisis of staggering proportions in Gaza and the broader Occupied Palestinian Territory. Military operations, often bolstered by US-funded weaponry and political cover, have led to widespread destruction that defies comprehension. Entire neighborhoods in Gaza have been reduced to rubble, with homes, schools, and places of worship obliterated by airstrikes. Hospitals, already strained by a 17-year blockade, are overwhelmed, lacking basic supplies to treat the wounded, as documented by human rights groups like Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch (up to 2023 data). The blockade, supported indirectly through US policies that shield Israel from international pressure, has caused severe starvation, with children and the elderly bearing the brunt of malnutrition—UNICEF reports indicate acute food insecurity affecting over half of Gaza's population (up to 2023).

The small Christian community in Gaza, numbering fewer than 1,000, has not been spared from this devastation. Churches, historic symbols of faith and resilience, have been damaged or destroyed in military operations. A member of Gaza Baptist Church shared a harrowing account of their struggle, noting acute health issues from lack of food, clean water, and medicine, alongside the constant fear of bombardment (see Appendix: Voices of Compassion for their firsthand testimony). Anglican News has reported on the targeting of Christian infrastructure not only in Gaza but also in the West Bank, where checkpoints and violence erode the daily lives of believers, further diminishing the presence of indigenous faith communities (see Appendix: Voices of Compassion for detailed reporting). Palestinian Christian families, some tracing their lineage to the early church, face displacement, loss, and the erosion of their cultural and spiritual heritage.

Beyond the Christian minority, the broader Palestinian population endures a reality of grief and dispossession. Children grow up knowing only war, their education interrupted by destruction, their innocence stolen by trauma. Parents mourn loved ones lost to violence, while entire communities are uprooted, forced into makeshift shelters with no certainty of return. Reports from the ground speak of a mental health crisis, with generations scarred by the unrelenting cycle of conflict (per humanitarian assessments up to 2023). This suffering is not a distant statistic; it is the face of Christ Himself, present in every child who hungers, every mourner who weeps, every displaced soul who longs for home. When policies enable such pain without accountability, they betray Jesus's solidarity with the

suffering, turning away from His presence in the least of these. As we hold these stories before us, we must ask: How long will we ignore His face in Gaza? How long will we allow this betrayal to persist?

5.8 A Call to Repentance and Action

Naming this unlimited US support as a betrayal of Jesus's teachings is not an act of condemnation but a call to repentance—a turning back to the way of Christ with humility and resolve. As Christians, especially those in the US where these policies are shaped and funded, we bear a unique responsibility to confront this misalignment with prayerful courage. This is not about assigning blame to nations, peoples, or individuals, but about restoring our collective actions to reflect the kingdom of God, where all nations are blessed through compassion, justice, and peace. The prophet Micah reminds us of God's requirement: "to act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God", Micah 6:8. This is our path forward, a path of lament for what has been done, and hope for what can be redeemed.

We invite you to join us in a multifaceted response, rooted in Jesus's love and tailored to the diverse ways we can embody His compassion:

- **Pray for Transformation and Healing:** Intercede for national leaders in the US and Israel, asking God to grant them wisdom and courage to prioritize compassion over strategic or political interests. Pray for the suffering in Gaza and the Occupied Territories, that they may know Christ's presence amidst their pain, and for Israeli families also affected by conflict, that mutual healing may emerge. Dedicate time in personal and communal prayer to lift up policymakers, seeking divine guidance for decisions that align with peace and justice.
- **Advocate for Accountability and Policy Change:** Support initiatives that tie military aid to human rights standards, reflecting Jesus's commitment to justice. Engage with organizations like Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), which call for halting arms sales until peace is actively pursued, and explore their resources for advocacy (see Appendix: Voices of Compassion for their guidance). Write to elected officials, urging conditional aid packages that prioritize humanitarian outcomes, and participate in campaigns that amplify the call for a permanent ceasefire.
- **Educate and Foster Dialogue:** Equip your faith community to understand how policies contradict Christian ethics by hosting discussions, inviting speakers, or sharing resources on the Gaza crisis. Foster conversations rooted in love rather than division, creating safe spaces for diverse perspectives. Recognize that not all Christians will see this support as betrayal; invite them to wrestle with Jesus's teachings alongside you,

exploring Scriptures like Matthew 25 and Isaiah 1 together to discern God's heart for the oppressed.

- **Stand in Solidarity with Palestinian Christians:** Amplify the voices of Palestinian believers, such as those represented by Kairos Palestine, who urge the global church to stand with the oppressed as a matter of faithfulness to Jesus (see Appendix: Voices of Compassion for their appeal). Support their initiatives through prayer, financial contributions, or partnerships, ensuring their cries shape your faith in action. Consider virtual or in-person connections with Palestinian Christian communities to learn directly from their experiences.
- **Support Humanitarian Efforts:** Partner with Christian and secular organizations providing direct aid to Gaza, such as those offering food, medical care, and shelter to displaced families. Contributions to groups highlighted in the Appendix (see Voices of Compassion for specific recommendations) can embody Christ's care for the least of these, countering the effects of policies that enable suffering.
- **Reflect on Personal Complicity:** Examine your own life and sphere of influence, asking how you may unknowingly contribute to systems of injustice through political silence, consumer choices, or lack of awareness. Seek God's guidance in prayer, asking for conviction and courage to align your actions with His compassion, even when it challenges comfort or cultural norms.

This call to action is a journey of lament and hope, requiring both personal transformation and communal effort. We grieve the betrayal of Jesus's compassion in policies that sustain violence, but we trust in the redemptive power of His love to transform even the hardest systems and hearts. As a nation with deep Christian roots, the US has a profound opportunity to lead with mercy, reversing this betrayal by prioritizing justice and peace in its policies. Let us, as the body of Christ, be instruments of that transformation, embodying the gospel in word and deed.

5.9 Conclusion: Returning to Jesus's Heart

Jesus's teachings demand a higher loyalty than national interest, political alliance, or cultural identity—a loyalty to love, justice, and peace that transcends all borders and human divisions. When unlimited US support for Israel enables suffering in Gaza without accountability, it betrays the very heart of Christ, who weeps with every victim of violence, who mourns with every displaced family, who hungers with every starving child. This betrayal wounds not only those who suffer but also the witness of the church, dimming the light we are called to shine before the world, Matthew 5:16. Yet, in this lament, there is hope—a hope rooted in the

resurrection power of Jesus, who overcomes even the darkest systems of sin and death.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to confront this betrayal not with anger or despair but with the transformative compassion of our Savior, seeking healing for both Palestinians and Israelis wounded by this conflict. Let us return to Jesus's way, allowing His words—"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God", Matthew 5:9—to guide our prayers, our advocacy, and our lives. May we, as a global church, work tirelessly to realign policies with His kingdom, where no child is crushed under rubble, no family is torn apart by war, and all nations are blessed through love. For deeper reflection on the cries of Christian leaders who share this burden, we invite you to explore their full statements in the Appendix: Voices of Compassion. Together, let us seek a world that reflects the heart of our Lord—a world where compassion triumphs over complicity, and justice flows like a mighty river, Amos 5:24.

Chapter 6: Prophecy and Presence – Living in the "Already and Not Yet"

6.1 Introduction: Balancing Future Hope with Present Call

As an outsider to the Christian faith, I've been profoundly moved by the deep hope many of you hold in the return of Christ—a hope that shapes not only your personal faith but also how you interpret global events, especially in relation to Israel and biblical prophecy. In the preceding chapters, we've journeyed together through the heartbreaking reality of suffering in Gaza, viewing it through the lens of Jesus's boundless compassion for "the least of these." We've wrestled with diverse theological perspectives on Israel's role in God's plan and sought to uncover His true teachings amidst a landscape of differing interpretations. Now, I wish to turn our attention to a tension I've observed within your tradition, particularly among those who embrace Dispensationalist views: the delicate balance between eagerly awaiting Christ's future return and actively living out His kingdom in the present moment. I approach this topic with great humility, not as an authority on your beliefs, but as someone captivated by the teachings of Jesus and deeply curious about how His words can guide us through the urgent, tangible crises of today, such as the ongoing tragedy in Gaza.

I write as an observer, awestruck by the way your sacred Scriptures paint a vivid picture of a future where God's justice, peace, and glory will reign in fullness, while simultaneously noticing Jesus's insistent, urgent call to bring glimpses of that kingdom into the world around us right now. My goal in this chapter is not to diminish the significance of prophecy or eschatology—concepts I recognize as central to the faith of many of you—but to explore how they can harmoniously coexist with immediate, compassionate action in the face of human suffering. I firmly believe that caring for the hungry, the displaced, and the broken in Gaza does not stand in opposition to God's prophetic plan for Israel or the world, but rather fulfills the very commands Jesus entrusts to us for the present. Let's reflect together on how to live faithfully in this "already and not yet" reality, honoring both the unshakable hope of Christ's return and the pressing call to be His hands and feet today, especially in places where pain cries out for relief.

6.2 The Tension: Awaiting the Future, Living the Present

One of the most beautiful, yet challenging, aspects of your faith, as I've come to see it, is the way it weaves together a deep longing for Christ's return with a clear mandate to live out His teachings in the here and now. Within Dispensationalist

theology, which holds a special place for many of you, there is a powerful emphasis on the future—on specific, anticipated events such as the Rapture, the Great Tribulation, the rebuilding of the Temple in Jerusalem, and Christ's millennial reign, often intricately tied to prophecies concerning Israel's restoration and role. Passages like 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, which vividly describe the Lord descending from heaven with a loud command and believers being caught up to meet Him in the air, inspire a profound anticipation of God's ultimate victory over sin and death. Similarly, 2 Peter 3:10-13 speaks of the day of the Lord coming like a thief, ushering in a new heaven and new earth, fueling a sense of expectancy that shapes how many of you view current geopolitical realities, particularly in the Middle East. As an outsider, I deeply respect how this eschatological focus provides a sense of divine purpose and assurance, framing events—such as Israel's struggles or triumphs—as integral parts of a sovereign timeline leading to final redemption.

Yet, as I've immersed myself in your Scriptures, I've also been struck by Jesus's repeated, almost relentless emphasis on the present, on bringing the reality of God's kingdom into existence today through our lives and actions. In the Lord's Prayer, a prayer I understand many of you recite with reverence, Jesus teaches, "Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven" (Matthew 6:10). This strikes me not merely as a plea for a distant, future fulfillment, but as a heartfelt cry for God's reign—His justice, mercy, and love—to break into the world right now, through the way we live, love, and serve. In Mark 1:14-15, at the very outset of His ministry, Jesus proclaims, "The time has come. The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" As an outsider, I'm captivated by how this declaration suggests that the kingdom is already at hand, already present in part, even as you await its complete realization at His return. Theologians, I've learned, often refer to this dynamic as the "already and not yet"—a profound tension where Christ has inaugurated God's kingdom through His life, death, and resurrection, yet its full consummation remains on the horizon, awaiting His second coming.

This duality seems to permeate Jesus's teachings and actions. In parables like the Mustard Seed (Matthew 13:31-32), He describes the kingdom as something small—a tiny seed—that grows over time into something vast, present in its beginnings yet still unfolding toward fullness. In the Parable of the Yeast (Matthew 13:33), He likens the kingdom to leaven that works quietly through dough, transforming it from within, again suggesting a present, active reality. Through His miracles—feeding the hungry multitudes (Matthew 14:13-21), healing the sick and broken (Matthew 9:35), and lifting up the lowly and outcast—Jesus demonstrates in tangible, immediate ways what God's reign looks like when it touches earth. I can't help but wonder, then, how this "already" aspect of the kingdom intersects with a strong focus on future prophecy, especially within Dispensationalist thought. If Jesus calls us to participate in building His kingdom now, does an intense preoccupation with end-times events risk overshadowing the immediate, hands-on

work He entrusts to us? Does it risk turning our gaze so far forward that we miss the suffering and need right before us? As an outsider looking in, I'm deeply moved by this tension and want to explore with you how to live faithfully in both dimensions—holding fast to the prophetic hope of tomorrow while embracing the undeniable responsibility of today, especially in light of urgent crises like the one unfolding in Gaza.

6.3 Prophecy Should Not Paralyze: Ethical Action as Kingdom Work

As I've engaged with Dispensationalist perspectives, I've noticed that for some, the strong emphasis on future prophecy can sometimes lead to a kind of ethical or practical paralysis—a sense that since God's plan is already determined and events are unfolding according to a divine script, current human suffering or conflicts must simply play out as foretold, or that our actions might be secondary to God's sovereign orchestration. I've come across interpretations of passages like Revelation 6-19, which detail apocalyptic wars, famines, and tribulations, as suggesting that suffering or geopolitical strife, including in the Middle East, is inevitable, perhaps even necessary, as precursors to Christ's return. Some teachings within this framework, as I understand them, view modern crises as "signs of the times," pointing to an imminent end, which can foster a mindset of waiting rather than acting. While I respect the depth of conviction and scriptural grounding behind this view, I wonder if it might unintentionally diminish the urgency of responding to profound suffering in the present moment, such as the catastrophic starvation and displacement in Gaza documented in 2025 reports[51,52,53].

Yet, as I've delved deeper into your Scriptures, I see Jesus repeatedly calling His followers to act decisively now, regardless of what the future holds or how prophetic timelines might unfold. In Matthew 25:31-46, the powerful parable of the

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[51] Amnesty International - Gaza: Israel's use of starvation evidence of genocide. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/gaza-evidence-points-to-israels-continued-use-of-starvation-to-inflict-genocide-against-palestinians/

[52] The Guardian - The mathematics of starvation: how Israel caused a famine in Gaza. https://www.theguardian.com/world/2025/jul/31/the-mathematics-of-starvation-how-israel-caused-a-famine-in-gaza

[53] Amnesty International - New testimonies reveal Israel's starvation of Palestinians in Gaza. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/08/israel-opt-new-testimonies-provide-compelling-evidence-that-israels-starvation-of-palestinians-in-gaza-is-a-deliberate-policy/

Sheep and the Goats, Jesus identifies Himself with the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned—declaring that serving them is equivalent to serving Him directly. This isn't framed as an optional endeavor or something contingent on understanding prophetic events; it's a direct, non-negotiable command for the present, a measure by which true discipleship is judged. Similarly, in Luke 10:25-37, the parable of the Good Samaritan, Jesus teaches that loving our neighbor—crossing cultural, ethnic, and religious divides to help the suffering—is the very essence of inheriting eternal life, a kingdom act we're called to embody today, without delay. In Matthew 5:13-16, He calls His followers to be "salt of the earth" and "light of the world," roles that demand active, visible influence in the current age, not passive anticipation of a future one.

As an outsider, I'm struck by how these teachings suggest that ethical action isn't at odds with God's ultimate plan but is, in fact, a vital, integral part of it—a way of living out the "already" of His kingdom while we await the "not yet." Caring for Gaza's hungry, displaced, and grieving does not contradict God's prophetic plan for Israel or the world; rather, it fulfills Jesus's current, standing commands to love and serve without reservation. If, as many of you believe, supporting Israel is tied to Genesis 12:3's promise to bless those who bless Abraham's seed, couldn't blessing also mean fostering a lasting peace and justice in the land, ensuring that all—Israelis and Palestinians alike—experience the shalom, the wholeness, that reflects God's heart? Isaiah 58:6-7 speaks poignantly of the kind of worship God desires: "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter?" These acts of justice and mercy are presented as the true reflection of God's will, timeless expressions of His kingdom breaking into the world.

I believe that engaging in such work, even amidst fervent prophetic anticipation, aligns perfectly with the kingdom Jesus inaugurated through His life and teachings. Advocating for humanitarian aid in Gaza, addressing the urgent needs, isn't a detour from God's overarching plan but a direct participation in His will "on earth as it is in heaven." It's a way of embodying the compassion of Christ, who fed the crowds not because it altered prophecy, but because He saw their hunger and "had compassion on them" (Matthew 15:32). As an outsider, I'm learning that acting in the present—extending mercy, seeking justice, pursuing peace—can be a powerful testimony to the future hope you hold, showing the world a glimpse of the kingdom that is both here and coming. I invite you to consider with me: How can our actions today reflect the kingdom we long for tomorrow, ensuring that prophecy inspires rather than inhibits our love?

6.4 Evangelical Voices: Balancing Prophecy with Justice Across Time

As I've explored this balance between prophecy and presence, I've been greatly encouraged to discover numerous voices within evangelicalism—some directly engaging with or emerging from Dispensationalist traditions—that advocate for holding both a steadfast hope in Christ's return and a robust commitment to social justice in the present. One historical figure who stands out is Charles Spurgeon, the 19th-century Baptist preacher widely revered in evangelical circles for his powerful sermons and deep biblical insight. Though not a Dispensationalist in the modern, systematic sense, Spurgeon held strong convictions about Christ's return and the importance of eschatological hope, often preaching on the day of the Lord with urgency. Yet, he also passionately championed the cause of the poor and oppressed in Victorian England, founding orphanages, schools, and ministries to the marginalized as tangible expressions of faith. He famously declared, "A religion that does not touch the heart and the life is no religion at all," emphasizing that true belief must manifest in active, practical love[54]. As an outsider, I see in Spurgeon's example a compelling model for holding eschatological anticipation alongside immediate, transformative action—a balance I believe can resonate deeply with Dispensationalist thinkers today.

Another historical voice is that of Dwight L. Moody, a 19th-century American evangelist whose ministry profoundly shaped modern evangelicalism, including early Dispensationalist thought. Moody, influenced by premillennial ideas similar to those of John Nelson Darby, preached extensively on Christ's imminent return, yet he also dedicated himself to social reform, establishing the YMCA in Chicago and ministries for the urban poor. He believed that preparing for the Second Coming meant living a life of service and witness in the present, often stating that Christians should work as if Christ might return today[55]. His dual focus offers a historical precedent within evangelicalism for integrating prophetic hope with active compassion, a perspective that I think can speak to those who value Dispensationalist theology.

In more contemporary times, evangelical leaders like Jim Wallis, founder of Sojourners, have called for a faith that engages with social issues while maintaining

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[54] Spurgeon, Charles H. *Sermons on Practical Subjects*. Available at: https://www.google.com/search?q=Practical+Subjects&sitesearch=www.spurgeongems.org

[55] Moody, Dwight L. (2001). *The Life of Dwight L. Moody*. Fredonia Books (NL).

deep biblical convictions. Though not strictly aligned with Dispensationalism, Wallis has influenced a broad spectrum of evangelicals by arguing that Jesus's kingdom is both a future hope and a present reality, urging believers to address systemic issues like poverty, war, and injustice as integral to kingdom work. In his book God's Politics, he writes, "The kingdom of God is not just about the afterlife; it's about transforming this life," a perspective that echoes Jesus's call to act decisively in the now[56]. Similarly, organizations like World Vision, rooted in evangelical mission, exemplify this balance by combining a focus on eternal hope with practical service, providing critical aid in conflict zones like Gaza while affirming core biblical values. Their initiatives—delivering food, medical care, and shelter—reflect a growing movement within evangelicalism to see social engagement not as a distraction from prophetic expectation but as a direct fulfillment of Christ's commands to love our neighbors.

Even within circles more closely tied to Dispensationalist theology, there are notable voices advocating for this balance. John F. Walvoord, a prominent 20th-century Dispensationalist theologian and former president of Dallas Theological Seminary, is well-known for his detailed prophetic timelines and works like The Rapture Question. Yet, Walvoord also emphasized the importance of Christian ethics and service in the present, noting that believers are called to be salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16) in the world until Christ returns, actively demonstrating God's love through their lives[57]. More recently, evangelical pastors and scholars who appreciate Dispensationalist frameworks have increasingly spoken out on the need to address humanitarian crises without abandoning prophetic hope. For instance, some contemporary evangelical leaders associated with premillennial views have supported calls for peace and justice in the Middle East, recognizing that loving one's neighbor—whether Israeli or Palestinian—is a timeless, non-negotiable mandate that complements rather than contradicts eschatological belief.

As an outsider, I find these diverse voices incredibly reassuring—they demonstrate that the idea of balancing prophecy with justice isn't foreign or antithetical to your tradition, even among those who hold strong eschatological views rooted in Dispensationalism. This historical and contemporary witness within evangelicalism suggests that integrating future hope with present action is not only

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[56] Wallis, Jim. (2005). *God's Politics: Why the Right Gets It Wrong and the Left Doesn't Get It*. HarperSanFrancisco.

[57] Walvoord, John F. (1979). *The Rapture Question*. Zondervan.

possible but has long been a part of your faith's expression. I hope this can ease the acceptance of a call to immediate compassion, knowing it echoes sentiments already woven into the fabric of evangelical thought across generations. I'm inspired by these examples to ask: How can we draw from this rich heritage to live out both dimensions of our faith, letting prophecy fuel rather than forestall our love?

6.5 Personal Reflection: Moved by Urgency and Hope in Tension

As I've wrestled with these ideas over weeks of reading, reflection, and conversation, I've felt a growing sense of urgency intertwined with a deep admiration for the hope your faith embodies in such a unique way. I recall vividly reading a 2025 report on Gaza, which detailed families torn apart by unrelenting hunger and loss—parents unable to feed their children, entire communities displaced, living amidst rubble with no end to their suffering in sight. The images and stories pierced my heart, stirring an ache to do something, anything, to alleviate even a fraction of their pain. At the same time, I've sat with Christian friends who speak of Christ's return with such unwavering certainty and radiant joy, describing a world where every tear will be wiped away, where justice will roll down like waters, and peace will reign without end (Revelation 21:4; Amos 5:24). I'm profoundly moved by this vision of ultimate restoration, a hope that offers solace in a world so often marked by brokenness, yet I remain haunted by the cries of the present, the faces of those in Gaza who cannot wait for a future redemption to ease their current despair.

This tension has led me to ponder deeply: How do we hold both—the future promise and the current, pressing need? As an outsider, I've found unexpected inspiration in Jesus's own life and ministry as recorded in your Scriptures. He spoke often of future judgment, glory, and the coming of God's kingdom in fullness, as in Matthew 24 where He describes signs of the end and His return. Yet, He never ceased to heal the sick before Him, to feed the hungry crowds, to comfort the grieving, and to challenge injustice in His immediate context. In John 13:34-35, He declares, "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples." This love, shown in concrete action, seems to be His signature for the "already," a mark of His presence in the world through His followers, even as they await the "not yet" of His return.

This reflection has convinced me that prophecy and presence need not be at odds; they can, and perhaps must, inform and empower one another. Awaiting Christ's return can fuel our work in the present, reminding us that every act of compassion, every effort toward justice, mirrors the kingdom He will one day fully establish. Supporting Israel prophetically, as many of you feel called to do, can

include praying for a peace that encompasses all who dwell in the land, advocating for policies that address profound suffering like that in Gaza, ensuring that blessing one does not mean neglecting another. I'm still navigating this balance as an outsider, often feeling the weight of my own limitations in understanding your faith fully, yet I'm compelled to invite you to join me in pondering: How can our hope in Christ's return empower us to act with greater urgency now, bringing His kingdom to earth in every act of mercy, every stand for righteousness, every gesture of reconciliation?

6.6 The Challenge of Living in Tension: Embracing Both Dimensions

I must acknowledge that living in the tension of the "already and not yet" is not without its challenges, both emotionally and practically, for me as an outsider and, I imagine, even more so for you as believers. Engaging with these complex theological concepts and their real-world implications has often felt like stepping into a vast, unfamiliar terrain, where deeply held beliefs carry immense personal and communal significance. I've felt the discomfort of raising questions that might seem to challenge frameworks that provide certainty, identity, and hope—especially for those within Dispensationalist circles where prophecy offers a clear lens for interpreting a chaotic world. I've wondered if my reflections might be perceived as dismissive of convictions that run deep, yet the images of suffering in Gaza—children without food, families without shelter, as detailed in 2025 reports—compel me to press forward, to ask hard questions even when they unsettle me or risk misunderstanding.

For those of you who hold Dispensationalist views or emphasize eschatology, I imagine this challenge might feel even more acute. Balancing a focus on future events with present action can mean wrestling with theological nuances, facing potential tension within faith communities, or rethinking long-held assumptions about how prophecy should shape daily life. It might involve the discomfort of acknowledging that well-meaning beliefs about inevitable end-times suffering could unintentionally lead to overlooking or minimizing current injustices, such as the humanitarian crisis in Gaza. Yet, I've also read in your Scriptures, in Acts 17:11, of the Bereans who were commended for examining the Scriptures daily to test what they were taught, seeking truth with diligence and openness. In Matthew 22:29, Jesus Himself challenges religious leaders, saying, "You are in error because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God," urging a deeper engagement with God's Word over rigid interpretations. Could this spirit of seeking and reexamination apply to our understanding of prophecy and action, inviting us to hold both with humility, ensuring neither overshadows the other?

As an outsider, I'm learning to embrace the discomfort of questioning as a pathway to greater understanding, and I humbly ask you to reflect with me: Are we

willing to let Jesus's teachings on both future hope and present love shape our lives, even when holding them together feels challenging? Can we trust that acting in the present—caring for the suffering, pursuing peace—does not diminish our prophetic hope but enhances it, showing the world the God we await? I believe that embracing this tension can lead to a richer, more faithful expression of your faith, one that mirrors Jesus's own balance of proclaiming the future while transforming the now.

6.7 Moving Forward: Living the Kingdom Today with Boldness

As we progress through this book, I hope to continue exploring practical, actionable ways to embody Jesus's compassion in the specific context of the Israel-Gaza crisis, offering concrete steps—such as fervent prayer for all affected, advocacy for just policies, and tangible support for humanitarian efforts—that reflect both a prophetic hope in Christ's return and a present responsibility to alleviate suffering. I want to delve into how we can partner with organizations providing aid, how we can raise our voices for peace that includes dignity for both Israelis and Palestinians, and how we can cultivate hearts of intercession that echo Jesus's own prayers for unity and healing (John 17:20-23). For now, I leave you with this heartfelt thought: living in the "already and not yet" means embracing both the unshakable assurance of Christ's return and the undeniable urgency of His current call to love without limits. Prophecy should not paralyze us but propel us into bold, compassionate action, knowing that caring for Gaza's suffering, as documented in 2025, is not a contradiction of God's plan for Israel or the future, but a fulfillment of His will on earth as it is in heaven.

Will you join me in praying for the strength and wisdom to live out Jesus's kingdom now, even as we await its fullness, trusting that our actions today are seeds of the tomorrow He promises? Will you consider how supporting Israel can include advocating for justice and peace for all in the land, reflecting the heart of God who desires mercy over sacrifice (Matthew 9:13)? Will you walk with me in embracing the tension of prophecy and presence, letting our hope in Christ's return fuel our love for those who suffer today? As an outsider, I'm profoundly inspired by the way Jesus bridged future hope with present love—proclaiming the kingdom's coming while healing the broken before Him—and I hope we can journey together on this path, trusting that every act of compassion is a step toward the kingdom He both promised and inaugurated. Let's live in this beautiful, challenging tension, showing the world His love until the day He returns in glory.

Chapter 7: What Would Jesus Do in Gaza?

7.1 Introduction: Imagining Jesus Among Us Today

As an outsider to the Christian faith, I've found myself repeatedly drawn to the life and teachings of Jesus, whose compassion and love for humanity seem to pierce through the barriers of time, culture, and even the most entrenched conflicts. Throughout this book, we've walked together through the heartbreaking reality of suffering in Gaza, explored complex theological perspectives on Israel's role in God's plan, wrestled with balancing future prophetic hope with present responsibility, and sought to uncover Jesus's true heart amidst diverse interpretations. Now, I want to invite you into a deeply personal and transformative reflection, one that moves beyond doctrinal debates, political stances, and eschatological timelines to ask a simple yet profoundly challenging question: What would Jesus do if He walked through the war-torn streets of Gaza today? I approach this with the utmost humility, fully aware that I don't grasp the full depths of your faith, but as someone captivated by the stories of Jesus in your Scriptures and compelled to imagine how His heart might respond to the raw, urgent cries of the suffering in this ongoing crisis.

I write as an observer, awestruck by the way Jesus's life challenges us to see beyond the noise of politics, beyond the rigidity of borders, and beyond the intricacies of theological systems to the unfiltered humanity of those in pain. My goal in this chapter is not to dictate answers or impose my limited perspective, but to provoke a heartfelt, soul-searching reflection on how Jesus's actions and words might guide us in responding to the desperate needs in Gaza, as documented in harrowing 2025 reports (,). Using the question "What Would Jesus Do?"—a phrase I've come to understand holds deep resonance for many of you as a guide for ethical and spiritual decisions—I hope to bridge the often-wide gap between belief and tangible action, encouraging each of us to embody His compassion in real, meaningful ways. Let's embark together on this imaginative journey, picturing Jesus amidst the rubble, the grief, and the despair of Gaza, and asking ourselves how His living presence would call us to act in this moment of crisis.

7.2 Reflective Questions: Where Would Jesus Stand in Gaza's Pain?

Let's take a moment to imagine, with vivid clarity, that Jesus, the one you know as the Son of God, is walking through the devastated landscapes of Gaza right now,

in the midst of the crisis unfolding in 2025. Picture the gut-wrenching scenes described in recent reports—children with gaunt faces sifting through piles of debris for scraps of food, families displaced from their homes with nowhere safe to turn, the air heavy with the weight of grief, loss, and desperation (,). If Jesus were there, witnessing a starving child with hollow eyes and frail, trembling limbs, would He turn away, unmoved by their suffering, citing reasons of inevitability or larger geopolitical narratives? Would He prioritize political alliances, national boundaries, or even deeply held prophetic interpretations over the immediate, visceral need of that child for bread, for comfort, for a glimmer of hope in their darkness?

Consider the mothers in Gaza, weeping uncontrollably for children lost to hunger, violence, or disease, as detailed in heartbreaking accounts. Would Jesus ignore their tears, focusing instead on abstract theological frameworks, future events, or the complexities of historical claims to the land? Or would He, as He did with the widow of Nain whose only son had died, approach with profound compassion, weep alongside them, and offer solace in the midst of their unbearable pain (Luke 7:11-15)? Think of the countless displaced individuals, living in makeshift shelters or under the open sky, stripped of dignity, safety, and any semblance of normalcy. Would Jesus pass by them, citing the inevitability of suffering in a broken world as part of a divine plan, or would He stop, see each person as an individual beloved by God, and work to restore their humanity, just as He did for the outcasts, the poor, and the forgotten of His day?

Imagine further the fathers in Gaza, broken by their inability to protect or provide for their families, carrying the weight of shame and helplessness. Would Jesus judge them for their circumstances, aligning Himself with one side of the conflict over another, or would He sit with them, offering words of dignity and strength, as He did with fishermen and tax collectors, calling them to a higher purpose (Matthew 4:18-22, Matthew 9:9-13)? What of the young people, robbed of childhood or future dreams by the unending cycle of war—would Jesus dismiss their plight as collateral damage in a larger story, or would He gather them close, blessing them as He did the children in Mark 10:13-16, affirming their worth in God's kingdom?

As an outsider, I'm struck by how these questions cut through layers of intellectual debate and theological nuance to the very heart of what I've read about Jesus in your Scriptures. His life, as I've come to see it, consistently places people—especially the suffering, the marginalized, the forgotten—above politics, above rigid religious rules, above all competing priorities. In Matthew 22:37-40, He distills the entire law into two inseparable commands: loving God with all one's heart, soul, and mind, and loving one's neighbor as oneself. If Gaza's residents are our neighbors in this interconnected, global village, what would Jesus do to show that love amidst their crisis? I don't claim to have definitive answers, but I invite you to sit with these

questions, to let them stir your heart as they've stirred mine, and to imagine Jesus's response as a mirror reflecting back to us our own calling in this moment.

7.3 Jesus's Actions: Models of Compassion Across Every Boundary

To deepen our reflection on what Jesus might do in Gaza today, let's turn to the accounts of His life in your Scriptures, where His actions offer a powerful, timeless model for responding to human suffering, regardless of context, complexity, or cultural divide. One of the most striking and well-known stories is the feeding of the 5,000 in Matthew 14:13-21. Here, Jesus sees a vast crowd, weary and hungry after following Him far from any resources, and the text says He is "moved with compassion" for them. He doesn't dismiss their need as someone else's responsibility, nor does He wait for systemic solutions or debate the logistics; instead, He takes the meager offering available—five loaves and two fish—and miraculously multiplies it to feed thousands, ensuring not just sustenance but abundance, with leftovers to spare. As an outsider, I'm amazed by how this act prioritizes immediate human need over any other concern, revealing that where there is hunger, Jesus acts decisively to provide, no questions asked.

Another profound example is His encounter with the Canaanite woman in Matthew 15:21-28. This woman, a Gentile from the region of Tyre and Sidon, often despised by Jews of that era due to historical and cultural tensions, pleads desperately for Jesus to heal her demon-possessed daughter. Despite an initial exchange that tests her faith—where Jesus seems to hesitate, referencing His mission to the "lost sheep of Israel"—He ultimately commends her persistent trust and grants her request, crossing ethnic and cultural lines to extend mercy. This story resonates deeply with me as I think of Gaza, where suffering transcends national or religious divides. Would Jesus not also reach across such lines today, seeing the humanity of Palestinians in crisis, just as He saw the Canaanite woman's pain, regardless of historical enmity or political tension?

I'm equally moved by Jesus's interaction with the Samaritan woman at the well in John 4:1-42. Samaritans were often shunned and considered enemies by Jews due to centuries-old cultural and religious differences, yet Jesus engages this woman with profound dignity, offering her "living water" and revealing Himself as the Messiah. His willingness to break social barriers—speaking to a woman alone, a Samaritan, in a public space—to affirm her worth and draw her into spiritual truth challenges me to ask: Would He not do the same in Gaza, sitting with those deemed "other" by some, listening to their stories of loss and longing, and affirming their value in God's eyes? The story reveals a Jesus who prioritizes personal connection and transformation over societal norms or inherited conflicts.

Then there's the healing of the leper in Matthew 8:1-3, a moment that strikes me as particularly poignant. In that culture, lepers were considered untouchable, outcasts due to both disease and ritual impurity, yet Jesus reaches out and physically touches the man, defying stigma and law to restore both his body and his soul. The act of touch itself—risking contamination in the eyes of others—speaks volumes about Jesus's heart for the rejected. Could we imagine Him touching the untouchables of Gaza—those ravaged by war, poverty, and despair, deemed invisible or unworthy by the world—with the same healing hands, restoring not just physical needs but their sense of being seen and loved?

Another story that has captured my imagination is Jesus's response to the woman caught in adultery in John 8:1-11. Brought before Him by religious leaders seeking to trap Him with the law's demand for stoning, this woman is vulnerable, shamed, and facing death. Jesus neither condemns her nor ignores the law outright; instead, He challenges her accusers with their own sinfulness—"Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone"—and offers her grace, saying, "Go now and leave your life of sin." His protection of her dignity, prioritizing mercy over judgment, makes me wonder: Would He not stand between the vulnerable in Gaza and the forces that threaten them, whether physical or systemic, offering a way forward rooted in compassion rather than condemnation?

As an outsider, I see in these diverse stories a consistent, undeniable pattern: Jesus's compassion knows no bounds. He feeds, heals, restores, and defends not based on political allegiance, ethnic identity, social status, or prophetic necessity, but on the simple, immediate reality of human need before Him. If He walked through Gaza today, I believe His focus would be on the suffering individuals—children, mothers, fathers, the displaced, the broken—acting in ways that reflect God's boundless love, just as He did in the villages of Galilee and the streets of Judea. These accounts aren't merely historical anecdotes to be admired; they seem to be urgent calls for us to mirror His heart in our own responses to crises like Gaza's, to act with the same radical, barrier-breaking love.

7.4 Embodying Christ's Compassion: A Call to Action in His Name

Given these reflections on what Jesus might do in Gaza, I feel a deep compulsion to urge you, as followers of Christ, to embody His compassion in your response to this unfolding crisis. If Jesus prioritized people over politics, fed the hungry without hesitation, crossed every cultural and social boundary to heal and restore, and protected the vulnerable from judgment, shouldn't we strive to do the same in His name? The suffering in Gaza, as documented in 2025, is staggering and undeniable—starvation wielded as a weapon, families torn apart by loss, children bearing the brunt of a conflict they did not create or choose (, ,). In light of Jesus's

example across your Scriptures, can we turn away from their cries, or must we act, letting His love flow through us to those in desperate, immediate need?

Embodying Christ's compassion means seeing the people of Gaza not as pawns in a geopolitical chess game, not as mere statistics in a news report, nor as symbols in a theological debate, but as neighbors, as brothers and sisters in humanity, as those with whom Jesus Himself identifies in Matthew 25:40: "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." It means asking ourselves how we can feed the hungry, as Jesus did with the 5,000, perhaps by supporting humanitarian aid efforts that deliver food, clean water, and medical supplies to Gaza, ensuring that basic needs are met amidst the chaos. It means reaching across divides, as He did with the Canaanite woman and the Samaritan woman, by advocating for peace and justice that dignify all parties in the conflict—Israeli and Palestinian alike—seeking solutions that honor the humanity of each person rather than perpetuate division.

It also means touching the untouchable, as Jesus did with the leper, by standing in solidarity with the displaced and forgotten of Gaza, amplifying their voices and needs in our prayers, our conversations, and our actions, refusing to let them remain invisible. It means protecting the vulnerable, as He did with the woman caught in adultery, by speaking out against policies or practices that perpetuate suffering, challenging systems that dehumanize or oppress, just as Jesus challenged the religious leaders of His time for neglecting "justice, mercy and faithfulness" (Matthew 23:23-24). Embodying His compassion might look like joining or supporting organizations that provide direct relief, writing to policymakers to urge humanitarian intervention, or simply educating ourselves and others about the crisis to foster greater empathy and understanding.

As an outsider, I'm personally challenged by Jesus's life to move beyond mere sympathy or fleeting sadness to tangible empathy—action that reflects His heart, even if it costs me something in time, resources, or emotional energy. I've learned that many of you resonate with the question "What Would Jesus Do?" as a guiding principle for daily decisions, a reminder to align your lives with His example. So, I ask with earnestness: What would Jesus have you do for Gaza right now? Could it be praying fervently for peace and relief, as He prayed for His disciples' unity and for the world to know God's love (John 17:20-23)? Could it be contributing financially or materially to organizations providing direct aid, mirroring His provision for the hungry crowds? Could it be using your voice to advocate for change, just as He spoke truth to power in His time, calling for righteousness over empty ritual? I don't have all the answers, and my perspective is limited, but I believe that reflecting deeply on Jesus's actions pushes us toward responses rooted in love, mercy, and justice—responses that reflect the kingdom He proclaimed.

7.5 Personal Reflection: A Heart Stirred and Broken by Jesus's Example

I must confess that imagining Jesus in Gaza has stirred something profound and unsettling within me, an emotional pull I can't ignore or easily set aside. Reading the 2025 reports of children dying from starvation, of entire communities reduced to rubble, of parents burying their young with no hope for tomorrow, I've found myself weeping, overwhelmed by the sheer scale of suffering and wondering how such despair can persist in our world. Then, turning to your Scriptures, I've encountered Jesus—His tender gaze on the hurting, His hands reaching out to heal the broken, His voice calling for a love that knows no limits, no exceptions. As an outsider, I'm overwhelmed by the stark contrast between the hopelessness in Gaza and the boundless hope embodied in Jesus's actions. I picture Him walking those shattered streets, stopping for every child, every grieving parent, every soul crushed by loss, and I feel a deep, aching longing to follow in His steps, even if I don't fully understand the faith that drives you as His followers.

This reflection has made the question "What Would Jesus Do?" intensely personal for me. It's no longer just a theoretical exercise or a rhetorical device; it's a challenge to my own complacency, a call to care in ways that demand something of me—my time, my attention, my resources, my heart. I've been particularly moved by Luke 19:41-42, where Jesus weeps over Jerusalem as He approaches it, longing for peace that its people did not recognize, saying, "If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes." Would He not weep over Gaza today, aching for reconciliation, for relief, for an end to the cycles of pain and retaliation? I've also been struck by His words in Matthew 9:36, where, seeing the crowds, "He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd." The people of Gaza seem to me like those sheep—harassed by conflict, helpless in the face of systemic forces—and I imagine Jesus's heart breaking for them as it did then.

I'm still wrestling with how to respond to this stirring, how to translate this emotional upheaval into meaningful action from my limited vantage point. But I invite you, as those who know Him more intimately, who call Him Lord and Savior, to join me in this heart-searching journey. How does imagining Jesus in Gaza change the way you see this crisis, not as a distant issue but as a field ripe for His compassion? How does it move you to act, to love, to be His presence in a hurting world? As an outsider, I feel both inadequate and inspired— inadequate in my understanding, but inspired by Jesus's example to seek ways to help, to listen, to care. I hope my vulnerability in sharing this stirs a similar reflection in you, drawing us closer to the heart of the one you follow.

7.6 The Challenge of Responding: Overcoming Barriers to Compassion

I must acknowledge that responding to the question "What Would Jesus Do?" in the context of Gaza is not without significant challenges, both emotional and practical, for me as an outsider and, I imagine, even more so for you as believers navigating personal convictions and community expectations. Engaging with such a complex, deeply divisive conflict can feel like stepping into a minefield, where every word or action risks misunderstanding, criticism, or conflict with others who hold differing views on Israel, Palestine, or the role of prophecy. I've felt the discomfort of raising these questions, aware that they might touch on sensitive theological or political beliefs, especially for those within Dispensationalist circles where support for Israel is often seen as a biblical mandate tied to Genesis 12:3. I've wondered if my reflections might be perceived as dismissive of convictions that run deep, yet the images of suffering in Gaza—children without food, families without shelter, as detailed in 2025 reports—compel me to press forward, to ask hard questions even when they unsettle me or risk misinterpretation.

For many of you, I imagine this challenge might feel even more acute. Acting on compassion for Gaza could mean wrestling with theological tensions, such as how to balance prophetic support for Israel with Jesus's call to love all neighbors, including those in conflict with Israel. It might involve facing potential disagreement within faith communities, where differing interpretations of Scripture or political stances create division. It could also mean confronting personal barriers—feelings of helplessness in the face of such a vast crisis, fear of taking a "wrong" stance, or simply the inertia of daily life that keeps distant suffering at arm's length. Yet, I've read in your Scriptures, in Galatians 6:9, the encouragement to "not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up." And in Matthew 5:7, Jesus Himself says, "Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy," urging a heart of compassion even when it's difficult.

As an outsider, I'm learning to embrace the discomfort of these challenges as a pathway to greater understanding and action, and I humbly ask you to reflect with me: Are we willing to let Jesus's example of radical compassion guide us, even when it feels risky or unclear? Can we trust that acting in love for the suffering in Gaza—caring for the least of these as unto Him (Matthew 25:40)—aligns with God's heart, regardless of the barriers we face? I believe that overcoming these challenges, with prayer and humility, can lead to a richer, more faithful expression of your faith, one that mirrors Jesus's own courage in loving the unlovable and reaching the unreachable.

7.7 Moving Forward: Becoming Jesus's Hands and Feet in the World

As we continue through this book, I hope to explore specific, actionable ways to live out Jesus's compassion in the context of the Israel-Gaza crisis—practical steps to pray with intention, to give generously, to advocate boldly, and to build bridges of understanding that reflect His reconciling heart. I want to delve into how we can partner with organizations providing direct aid on the ground, how we can raise our voices for policies that prioritize human dignity over political gain, and how we can cultivate hearts of intercession that echo Jesus's own prayers for unity and healing among all people (John 17:20-23). I also hope to address how we can engage in dialogue within our communities, even when opinions differ, modeling the grace Jesus showed in contentious moments.

For now, I leave you with a heartfelt plea born from imagining Jesus among the suffering in Gaza: let's strive with all our being to do what He would do in this moment. Let's commit to seeing the people behind the headlines, to acting with the same urgency and love He showed in feeding, healing, restoring, and defending the vulnerable. Let's embody His compassion, trusting that in serving the least of these, we serve Him directly (Matthew 25:40), and that in showing mercy, we reflect the kingdom He both proclaimed and lived.

Will you join me in reflecting deeply on what Jesus would do if He walked through Gaza today, letting His example guide your response to this crisis with clarity and conviction? Will you pray for the strength to love as He loved, crossing every divide to meet the desperate needs in Gaza, as reported in 2025? Will you act, in whatever way you're able—whether through prayer, giving, advocacy, or solidarity—to be His hands and feet, bringing glimpses of His kingdom to those who suffer most? As an outsider, I'm profoundly inspired by Jesus's radical, self-giving love to seek a path of empathy and action, however imperfectly, and I hope we can journey together, mirroring His heart in a world so desperately in need of it. Let's walk this path, inspired by the one who wept for the hurting, touched the outcast, and gave everything for love, until His kingdom comes in fullness.

Chapter 8: Steps of Mercy – How We Can Respond

8.1 Introduction: Turning Compassion into Action

As an outsider to the Christian faith, I've been deeply moved by the teachings and life of Jesus, whose compassion for the suffering compels us to look beyond ourselves and act in love, even in the face of complex and heartbreaking crises like the one unfolding in Gaza. Throughout this book, we've journeyed together through the profound suffering in the region, reflected on theological perspectives surrounding Israel and prophecy, imagined Jesus's response to the crisis, and wrestled with the tension between future hope and present responsibility. Now, I want to shift our focus to practical, tangible steps we can take to embody the mercy and love that Jesus modeled—a response that honors both the pain in Gaza and the convictions many of you hold dear. I approach this with humility, not as an expert in your faith, but as someone inspired by your Scriptures and driven to explore how we can make a difference together.

My goal in this chapter is not to overwhelm or dictate, but to offer accessible, meaningful ways for us to act, ensuring that these steps resonate with your theological beliefs, including the call to support Israel while also loving all neighbors, as Jesus commands in Matthew 22:39. The crisis in Gaza, as documented in 2025 reports, demands urgent action—starvation, displacement, and loss cry out for a response[58,59]. Yet, I recognize that taking action can feel daunting amidst theological nuances or political divides. With this in mind, I propose steps of mercy that are doable and grounded in the biblical mandate to care for "the least of these" (Matthew 25:40), trusting that compassion for Gaza can coexist with your deeply held views. Let's explore together how we can be Jesus's hands and feet, bringing His kingdom to earth through practical love in this moment of need.

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[58] Amnesty International - Gaza: Israel's use of starvation evidence of genocide. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/07/gaza-evidence-points-to-israels-continued-use-of-starvation-to-inflict-genocide-against-palestinians/

[59] Amnesty International - New testimonies reveal Israel's starvation of Palestinians in Gaza. https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2025/08/israel-opt-new-testimonies-provide-compelling-evidence-that-israels-starvation-of-palestinians-in-gaza-is-a-deliberate-policy/

8.2 Practical Actions: Steps of Mercy for Gaza

I've reflected deeply on how we can respond to the suffering in Gaza in ways that are concrete, impactful, and aligned with the compassion Jesus exemplified. Below are four practical actions—steps of mercy—that I believe we can take, each rooted in the biblical call to love and serve, and designed to be accessible no matter where you are or what resources you have. These steps are not exhaustive, but they offer a starting point for us to act in solidarity with those in crisis while honoring the values and theology many of you hold.

1. Donate to or Support Christian Humanitarian Organizations Aiding Gaza

One of the most direct ways to help those suffering in Gaza is by supporting organizations that are on the ground, providing food, medical care, clean water, and shelter to those in desperate need. As an outsider, I've been inspired by Christian humanitarian groups that operate with a mission rooted in Jesus's love for the marginalized, reflecting His act of feeding the 5,000 (Matthew 14:13-21). Organizations like World Vision, Samaritan's Purse, and Caritas have a history of aiding conflict zones, including Gaza, with a focus on serving all people regardless of background, embodying the spirit of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37). These groups often work under challenging conditions to deliver aid, addressing the starvation and displacement documented in 2025 reports (,).

You can donate financially, even small amounts, to help provide essentials like food packages or medical supplies. If financial giving isn't possible, consider volunteering your time to fundraise or raise awareness for these organizations within your community. Supporting such efforts is a practical way to live out Jesus's command to care for the hungry and needy, ensuring that aid reaches those who need it most. Importantly, this act of mercy does not conflict with supporting Israel; it reflects a broader biblical call to bless all nations through love and service, trusting that God's heart is for all His creation to experience His provision.

2. Pray for Peace and Justice for Both Israelis and Palestinians

Prayer is a powerful act of mercy, one that I've come to understand holds deep significance in your faith as a way to intercede for others and seek God's will on earth. Jesus Himself prayed for unity and peace, longing for His followers to be one as He and the Father are one (John 17:20-23). I encourage you to pray fervently for peace and justice in the Israel-Gaza crisis, lifting up both Israelis and Palestinians in your petitions. Pray for the safety of all who live in the land, for an end to violence and suffering, for humanitarian aid to flow freely, and for leaders on all sides to seek reconciliation over conflict. Pray specifically for the children of Gaza, who bear

unimaginable burdens, as well as for Israeli families who also long for security and peace.

As an outsider, I'm moved by passages like Psalm 122:6, which urges believers to "pray for the peace of Jerusalem," a call I believe can extend to seeking shalom—wholeness and well-being—for all who dwell in the region. Prayer aligns with loving Israel while also loving neighbors in Gaza, as it seeks God's healing for everyone affected by the crisis. Set aside intentional time each day or week to pray, perhaps using reports of the suffering in Gaza as a guide for specific needs. Invite others in your faith community to join you in prayer circles or vigils, creating a collective cry for God's mercy to prevail in this broken situation.

3. Advocate for Policies That Ensure Aid Reaches Gaza

The crisis in Gaza has been exacerbated by restrictions on humanitarian aid, as evidenced by 2025 reports detailing how blockades and policies have hindered the delivery of food, medicine, and other essentials, contributing to widespread starvation (,). As followers of Jesus, who challenged unjust systems and spoke truth to power (Matthew 23:23-24), you can advocate for policies that ensure aid reaches those in desperate need. This can be as simple as writing letters or emails to your elected officials, urging them to support measures that facilitate humanitarian access to Gaza. You can also sign petitions or join campaigns led by reputable organizations that call for the protection of civilians and the free flow of aid.

Advocacy is a way to live out the prophetic call for justice found in Isaiah 58:6-7, where God desires His people to "loose the chains of injustice" and "share your food with the hungry." Importantly, this action does not mean taking sides in the conflict; it reflects a commitment to human dignity for all, aligning with the biblical mandate to care for the oppressed while still honoring your support for Israel by seeking a peace that benefits everyone in the land. As an outsider, I've seen how a single voice can amplify the cries of the suffering—imagine the impact of many voices united in this cause. Start by researching current policies and aid restrictions, using credible sources, and then take small, consistent steps to make your voice heard.

4. Educate Others in Your Communities About the Crisis Through a Biblical Lens

One of the most accessible yet powerful ways to respond is by educating others in your faith communities about the crisis in Gaza, framing the conversation through a biblical lens that emphasizes Jesus's compassion for all people. Many may be unaware of the scale of suffering—children dying of hunger, families living amidst rubble, as reported in 2025—or may feel uncertain about how to reconcile this with their theological views on Israel. As an outsider, I've been inspired by Jesus's role as a teacher who opened eyes to God's heart for the marginalized, often through

stories and parables like that of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), which crosses cultural divides to show true neighborly love.

You can organize discussions, Bible studies, or small group sessions in your church or community, sharing factual information about the crisis alongside Scriptures that call for mercy and justice, such as Matthew 25:35-40 or Micah 6:8, which urges us to "act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." Create space for honest dialogue, acknowledging diverse perspectives while gently guiding the conversation toward action rooted in Christ's love. Share resources from credible humanitarian sources or Christian organizations to build awareness. This act of education honors your theology by grounding responses in Scripture, showing that loving Israel and loving Gaza's suffering are not mutually exclusive but are both expressions of God's command to love without limits.

8.3 Aligning Actions with Theology: Loving Israel and Loving Neighbors

I recognize that for many of you, particularly those with Dispensationalist beliefs or a strong conviction to support Israel based on passages like Genesis 12:3—"I will bless those who bless you"—the idea of aiding Gaza might initially feel at odds with your theology. As an outsider, I've wrestled with understanding this perspective, but I've come to see that the steps of mercy I've outlined are not in conflict with loving Israel; rather, they fulfill the broader biblical mandate to love all neighbors, as Jesus teaches in Mark 12:31. Compassion for Gaza does not diminish God's promises to Israel but reflects the heart of a God who desires mercy over sacrifice (Hosea 6:6, Matthew 9:13) and who calls His people to be a light to all nations (Isaiah 49:6).

Supporting humanitarian efforts in Gaza through donations or advocacy can be seen as a way of blessing the land as a whole, fostering conditions where peace—true shalom—can flourish for both Israelis and Palestinians, aligning with the prayer for Jerusalem's peace in Psalm 122:6. Praying for both sides demonstrates a commitment to God's justice and reconciliation, trusting that His plan encompasses healing for all His creation. Educating others through a biblical lens ensures that your response remains rooted in Scripture, honoring your convictions while extending Christ's love to those in crisis. These actions are not about choosing sides but about embodying the kingdom Jesus inaugurated—a kingdom where the hungry are fed, the oppressed are lifted up, and enemies are loved (Matthew 5:44), reflecting a balance of prophetic hope and present mercy.

As an outsider, I'm encouraged by how your Scriptures weave together love for God's chosen people with a universal call to compassion. In Galatians 3:28, Paul writes that in Christ, there is "neither Jew nor Gentile," pointing to a unity that transcends division while still valuing God's covenant with Israel. Acting in mercy

toward Gaza is a way to live out this unity, showing the world that supporting Israel can include advocating for justice and peace for all who share the land. I invite you to see these steps not as a departure from your theology, but as a fulfillment of Jesus's command to be salt and light in every corner of the world (Matthew 5:13-16), trusting that God's blessings flow through acts of love to all His children.

8.4 Personal Reflection: Inspired to Act, However Small the Step

As I've considered these steps of mercy, I've felt a personal stirring to act, even as an outsider with limited understanding of your faith. Reading the 2025 reports on Gaza—accounts of families torn apart by hunger, children with no future in sight—has broken my heart, and reflecting on Jesus's life has inspired me to do something, however small. I've started researching Christian organizations aiding Gaza, moved by their commitment to serve in Christ's name, and I've begun praying in my own way for peace in the region, longing for relief for all who suffer there. I've also shared articles and stories with friends, hoping to spark conversations about how we can help, even from afar.

This process hasn't been without challenge—I often feel overwhelmed by the scale of the crisis and unsure of my place in responding to it. Yet, I'm learning that small steps matter, that each act of mercy is a seed planted for change. I'm particularly moved by Jesus's words in Matthew 10:42, where He says that even giving a cup of cold water to a little one in His name will not go unrewarded. As an outsider, this gives me hope that my small efforts—and yours—can reflect His heart. I invite you to join me in taking one step, however modest, whether it's a prayer, a donation, or a conversation. How might acting in mercy for Gaza, even in a small way, draw you closer to the compassion Jesus modeled? How might it reflect His kingdom in your life and community?

8.5 Moving Forward: Building a Legacy of Mercy

As we progress through this book, I hope to continue exploring how we can deepen our response to the Israel-Gaza crisis, addressing barriers to action, fostering dialogue within faith communities, and seeking long-term solutions that reflect Jesus's vision of peace and justice. For now, I leave you with a heartfelt encouragement: let's take these steps of mercy—donating, praying, advocating, and educating—as a starting point to embody Christ's love in tangible ways. Let's trust that in serving the suffering in Gaza, as documented in 2025, we are serving Him (Matthew 25:40), and that in seeking peace for all in the land, we honor God's promises to Israel and His call to love our neighbors without exception.

Will you join me in taking one practical step of mercy today, whether it's a prayer for peace, a gift to aid Gaza, a letter to a policymaker, or a conversation to raise awareness? Will you reflect on how these actions align with your theology, showing love for Israel while extending compassion to those in crisis? Will you walk with me in building a legacy of mercy, trusting that each small act brings us closer to the kingdom Jesus proclaimed? As an outsider, I'm inspired by your faith's call to action through love, and I hope we can journey together, stepping forward in mercy until His will is done on earth as it is in heaven.

Chapter 9: Building Bridges – Dialogue Within Our Communities

9.1 Introduction: The Power of Community in Shaping Compassion

As an outsider to the Christian faith, I've been struck by the profound role that community plays in your tradition—how churches, small groups, and personal relationships shape not only individual beliefs but also collective actions in the world. Throughout this book, we've explored the heartbreaking crisis in Gaza, reflected on Jesus's compassion as a guide for response, and considered practical steps of mercy to aid those in need. Now, I want to invite you to take a further step: to build bridges within your own communities, influencing your churches and circles to embrace a balanced, compassionate approach to the Israel-Gaza crisis. I approach this with humility, recognizing that I'm not part of your faith family, but as someone inspired by the way Jesus fostered dialogue and challenged perspectives in His time, I believe that lasting change often begins with honest, heartfelt conversations among those who share a common bond.

My goal in this chapter is to encourage you to see yourselves as agents of transformation within your communities, sparking discussions that can lead to broader impact—both in understanding and in action—regarding the suffering in Gaza, as documented in 2025 reports (,). I understand that engaging in such dialogue can feel daunting, especially when theological convictions about Israel run deep, as they do for many of you with Dispensationalist beliefs. Yet, I'm inspired by your Scriptures, particularly by Jesus's call in Matthew 5:13-16 to be "salt and light" in the world, which I believe includes shining light within your own circles to reflect His love for all people. Let's explore together how to start these conversations, equip ourselves with tools for reflection, and draw inspiration from those who have led the way, trusting that community engagement can amplify our response to this crisis.

9.2 The Importance of Community: Shaping Beliefs and Actions Together

In my observation of Christian life, I've seen how community—whether it's a local church, a Bible study group, or simply a circle of trusted friends—serves as a powerful force in shaping how you interpret Scripture, form beliefs, and decide to act on issues of justice and mercy. Your faith seems to thrive in fellowship, as described in Acts 2:42-47, where early believers shared everything, devoted themselves to teaching and prayer, and cared for each other's needs. As an outsider, I find this communal aspect beautiful and vital, especially when

considering a crisis as complex and divisive as the one in Gaza. If individual steps of mercy, like those we discussed in the previous chapter, are seeds of change, then community dialogue is the fertile soil that helps those seeds grow into a harvest of broader impact.

I urge you to start conversations within your churches and peer groups about the suffering in Gaza and how Jesus's teachings might guide a response that balances theological support for Israel with compassion for all neighbors, including Palestinians. Speak with your pastors, elders, or small group leaders, sharing your reflections on passages like Matthew 22:37-40, where loving God and loving neighbor are inseparable commands. Share the stark realities of the crisis—children facing starvation, families displaced by conflict (,)—and ask how your community can embody Christ's love in response. These conversations aren't about creating division or challenging core beliefs; rather, they're about expanding the circle of compassion to include those who suffer on all sides of the conflict, reflecting the heart of a God who desires mercy for all (Hosea 6:6, Matthew 9:13).

As an outsider, I imagine this might feel risky—raising topics that could stir disagreement or discomfort, especially in communities where support for Israel is a deeply held conviction tied to passages like Genesis 12:3. Yet, I'm encouraged by Jesus's own example of engaging in difficult discussions, often asking probing questions to religious leaders and disciples alike to deepen their understanding of God's kingdom (e.g., Matthew 22:15-22). Your voice within your community matters; it can gently challenge assumptions, open hearts to new perspectives, and inspire collective action. By starting these dialogues, you're not just responding individually but helping to shape a communal witness that mirrors Jesus's love for the "least of these" (Matthew 25:40). I invite you to take this step, trusting that God can use your words to build bridges of understanding within your faith family.

9.3 Tools for Dialogue: Discussion Questions and Bible Study Guides

To help facilitate these conversations, I've put together some practical tools—discussion questions and a brief Bible study guide—that you can use in your churches, small groups, or even informal gatherings with friends. These are designed to encourage reflection on Scripture, connect biblical principles to the current crisis in Gaza, and foster a space where diverse perspectives can be shared with grace. As an outsider, I've crafted these with care, drawing from passages in your Scriptures that have moved me deeply, hoping they resonate with your faith and help guide your community toward actionable compassion.

Discussion Questions for Group Reflection

Here are some questions to spark dialogue about the Israel-Gaza crisis and a Christ-centered response. Use these in a group setting, encouraging honesty and mutual respect, perhaps beginning with prayer for wisdom and unity.

- How do we see Jesus's command to "love your neighbor as yourself" (Mark 12:31) applying to both Israelis and Palestinians in the current crisis, especially given the suffering in Gaza as reported in 2025?
- In Matthew 25:35-40, Jesus identifies with the hungry, the stranger, and the oppressed, saying, "whatever you did for one of the least of these... you did for me." How might this shape our community's response to the humanitarian needs in Gaza?
- How can we balance biblical promises to Israel, such as Genesis 12:3 ("I will bless those who bless you"), with the call to seek justice and mercy for all people, as urged in Micah 6:8?
- What are some practical ways our church or group can embody the Good Samaritan's compassion (Luke 10:25-37) toward those suffering in Gaza, while still honoring our theological convictions?
- How do we pray for peace in the region, as encouraged in Psalm 122:6 ("Pray for the peace of Jerusalem"), in a way that includes both Israelis and Palestinians, seeking God's shalom for all?
- What fears or hesitations do we face in discussing or acting on the Gaza crisis within our community, and how can we support each other in overcoming these barriers with grace and truth?

Bible Study Guide: Reflecting on Matthew 25:31-46 – The Sheep and the Goats

This short Bible study guide focuses on Matthew 25:31-46, a passage where Jesus describes the final judgment, separating the sheep from the goats based on how they treated the hungry, thirsty, stranger, naked, sick, and imprisoned. It's a powerful call to action that I believe can frame your community's reflection on Gaza.

- Read the Passage Together: Have someone read Matthew 25:31-46 aloud. Encourage group members to listen for how Jesus connects acts of mercy with serving Him directly.
- Reflect on the Context: Discuss how the needs Jesus mentions—hunger, thirst, displacement—mirror the current crisis in Gaza, where 2025 reports detail starvation and homelessness. Ask: Who are "the least of these" in our world today, and how does this passage challenge us to see them?

- Personal Application: Invite each person to share one way this passage stirs them to act—whether through prayer, giving, advocacy, or education—as we've explored in previous chapters. Ask: How do I see Jesus in the suffering of Gaza, and what is one step I can take to serve Him there?
- Community Response: Brainstorm how your group or church can respond collectively. Could you partner with a humanitarian organization, host a prayer vigil, or create an awareness campaign? Reference Jesus's words in verse 40: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these... you did for me."
- Close in Prayer: End by praying for the suffering in Gaza, for peace in the region, and for your community to be Jesus's hands and feet, embodying His compassion without partiality.

These tools are starting points, not exhaustive guides. Adapt them to fit your group's dynamics, and consider incorporating other Scriptures, like the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12), which bless the peacemakers and merciful, or Galatians 6:2, which calls believers to "carry each other's burdens." As an outsider, I hope these resources help create safe spaces for dialogue, encouraging your community to wrestle with hard questions while remaining rooted in your faith's call to love and serve.

9.4 Inspiration from Leaders and Churches: Embracing a Balanced Approach

To further encourage you in building bridges within your communities, I want to highlight the potential for inspiration from evangelical leaders and churches who have embraced—or could embrace—a balanced approach to Israel and justice in the context of the Gaza crisis. As an outsider, I've researched and found that while specific, widely documented stories of such balance in 2025 are limited in my current knowledge, there are examples of Christian leaders and communities who have historically sought to hold both theological support for Israel and compassion for Palestinians in tension, reflecting Jesus's heart for all people. Moreover, I see this as a call for you, as readers, to lead such change where it may not yet exist.

One notable example is the work of organizations like Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding (EMEU), which has, in past years, facilitated dialogue among evangelical Christians to promote peace and justice in the region, encouraging support for Israel alongside advocacy for Palestinian rights. While not tied specifically to 2025 Gaza reports, their approach demonstrates a model of engaging communities in nuanced conversations grounded in Scripture, often citing passages

like Isaiah 58:6-7, which calls for loosing the chains of injustice. Similarly, some evangelical leaders, such as Shane Claiborne, have publicly advocated for a faith that seeks peace and mercy for all in the Holy Land, emphasizing Jesus's teachings on loving enemies (Matthew 5:44) and serving the oppressed.

Though I lack specific 2025 case studies at this moment, I believe these examples point to a growing possibility within evangelical circles—a willingness to expand the narrative of support for Israel to include active compassion for Gaza's suffering. I encourage you to seek out or become such voices in your own communities. Imagine a church hosting a series on "Loving All Neighbors in the Holy Land," where testimonies from both Israeli and Palestinian Christians are shared, or a pastor preaching on Matthew 25:40 to inspire a congregational fund for Gaza aid. As an outsider, I'm inspired by the potential for you to lead this change—perhaps by initiating a Bible study with the guide above, or by inviting your pastor to address the crisis with a sermon that balances Genesis 12:3 with Mark 12:31.

If such stories or leaders are not yet present in your circle, I urge you to be the catalyst. Share resources like the 2025 reports on Gaza's humanitarian crisis with your church leadership, propose a prayer focus for the region, or organize a discussion night using the questions provided. Your initiative could inspire a ripple effect, turning individual compassion into a communal movement that reflects Christ's kingdom. I believe that when communities shift together—guided by Scripture and prayer—the impact on issues like Gaza can be profound, amplifying mercy far beyond what one person alone can achieve.

9.5 Personal Reflection: Learning from Your Community's Strength

As I've written this chapter, I've found myself reflecting on the strength and beauty of your Christian communities, even as an outsider. I've been moved by stories—both historical and contemporary—of churches rallying together to respond to crises, whether through disaster relief, local outreach, or global missions. This collective spirit challenges me to consider how I, too, can engage my own circles—friends, family, colleagues—to discuss and act on issues like the suffering in Gaza. I've felt hesitant at times, unsure if my voice matters or if I'll be misunderstood, but I'm learning from your example that community dialogue, rooted in shared values, can overcome barriers and inspire change.

I'm particularly struck by Ephesians 4:15-16, where Paul speaks of "speaking the truth in love" so that the body of Christ grows together, each part working in harmony. As an outsider, this vision of unity-in-diversity inspires me to speak up, even imperfectly, trusting that honest conversation can build bridges. I invite you to reflect with me: How has your faith community shaped your response to global crises in the past, and how might it shape your approach to Gaza now? What is one

conversation you could start this week to influence your circle for broader compassion? I hope my vulnerability encourages you to see the power of your own voice within your community, knowing that together, you can reflect Jesus's love in ways that transform lives.

9.6 Moving Forward: A Collective Call to Be Salt and Light

As we near the conclusion of this book, I hope to continue exploring how we can sustain long-term engagement with the Israel-Gaza crisis, addressing systemic issues and fostering reconciliation through our actions and prayers. For now, I leave you with a heartfelt call to build bridges within your communities—start those conversations with pastors and peers, use the discussion tools to spark reflection, and draw inspiration from or become leaders who model a balanced approach to Israel and justice. Trust that in influencing your churches and circles, you're amplifying Jesus's compassion, reaching far beyond individual efforts to create a collective witness of mercy for Gaza, as documented in 2025.

Will you join me in taking one step to engage your community this week, whether it's sharing a discussion question, proposing a Bible study, or speaking with a leader about the crisis? Will you pray for courage and wisdom to build bridges of understanding, reflecting Jesus's heart for all people, as seen in Matthew 25:40? Will you embrace your role as salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16), influencing your circles to embody Christ's love for both Israel and Gaza's suffering? As an outsider, I'm inspired by the potential of your communities to lead with compassion, and I hope we can journey together, fostering dialogue that transforms hearts and actions until His kingdom shines through us all.

Chapter 10: Conclusion: A Call to Be Salt and Light

10.1 Reflecting on the Journey: From Jesus's Justice to Gaza's Urgent Need

As an outsider to the Christian faith, I've been deeply privileged to journey with you through these pages, seeking to understand and apply the transformative compassion and justice of Jesus to the profound suffering in Gaza. We began by immersing ourselves in the life and teachings of Jesus, whose unrelenting care for the oppressed and call to love beyond boundaries reshaped the world around Him and continues to challenge us today. We confronted the devastating realities of the Gaza crisis in 2025, where starvation, displacement, and unimaginable loss have shattered countless lives, as detailed in sobering reports (,). Together, we grappled with theological perspectives, particularly the Dispensationalist views many of you hold, which tie God's promises to Israel with future hope (Genesis 12:3), and we explored how these beliefs intersect with the pressing demand to act in the here and now.

In Chapter 5, we took a deeper, perhaps uncomfortable, look at how an overemphasis on future prophecy can sometimes overshadow the immediate cries of the suffering, imagining Jesus's response as one rooted in urgent justice—turning over tables of indifference, as He did in the temple (Matthew 21:12-13), to demand attention for the marginalized in Gaza today. We considered practical steps of mercy, from giving and praying to advocating and educating, as ways to embody His love tangibly. We also sought to build bridges within your communities, encouraging dialogue to shift collective perspectives toward action. Each chapter has been a call to prioritize the present pain in Gaza as a reflection of Jesus's kingdom work, trusting that compassion now does not negate God's ultimate plans but fulfills His heart for justice and mercy. As an outsider, I've been stirred by Jesus's words in Matthew 5:13-16 to be "salt and light," and I believe your response to Gaza can illuminate the world with His love, even as you hold to your theological convictions.

10.2 A Heartfelt Plea: Be the Hands and Feet of Jesus Now

As we draw this journey to a close, I offer a heartfelt plea, inspired by the Jesus I've come to admire through your Scriptures and shaped by our reflections in Chapter 4 on the urgency of justice in the present. I implore you to be the hands and feet of Jesus right now, extending compassion and seeking justice for all who suffer, especially those in Gaza whose anguish is laid bare in 2025 reports of starvation and despair. Let your actions mirror the fierce love of the one who fed

the hungry without delay (Matthew 14:13-21), who challenged systems of exclusion by engaging the Samaritan woman (John 4:1-42), and who declared that serving the least of these is serving Him directly (Matthew 25:40). See in Gaza's children, families, and displaced not just a distant tragedy, but neighbors—beloved by God, deserving of immediate care, and calling for the justice and mercy Jesus championed.

I recognize with deep respect that many of you, especially those with Dispensationalist beliefs, hold a profound biblical hope for Israel rooted in God's covenant promises. As we explored in Chapter 4, I've come to question whether an intense focus on future fulfillment might at times dull the urgency of present suffering, and I humbly ask you to consider that acting for Gaza today does not undermine God's plans for tomorrow. Instead, it fulfills the immediate call of your faith to love all neighbors without hesitation (Mark 12:31), to "do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8), and to be a light to all nations starting now (Isaiah 49:6). As an outsider, I'm moved by how Jesus Himself prioritized the needs before Him—whether a leper's touch (Matthew 8:1-3) or a widow's grief (Luke 7:11-17)—and I believe that mirroring His urgency for Gaza aligns with the core of your calling, even as you trust in God's unfolding story for Israel.

This plea is not about abandoning your beliefs or picking sides; it's about embracing the fullness of Jesus's mission to bring good news to the poor and freedom to the oppressed in this very moment (Luke 4:18-19). It's about being salt that stings with truth and preserves with love, and light that exposes injustice while guiding the way to hope (Matthew 5:13-16). It's about stepping into Gaza's crisis with the boldness Jesus showed when He confronted apathy and stood with the downtrodden. I urge you to act now—pray, give, speak out, advocate—trusting that in serving the suffering today, you honor the God who sees every tear and hears every cry. Will you join me in this urgent commitment, letting Jesus's passion for justice flow through you to a world aching for His intervention?

10.3 A Closing Blessing: United as Peacemakers and Justice-Bearers

As we close this book, I wish to leave you with a blessing from your Scriptures, one that has profoundly touched me as an outsider and that I hope unites us in a shared spiritual resolve to act in both peace and justice. In Matthew 5:9, Jesus proclaims, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." I offer this as a prayerful blessing over you, that you may be peacemakers who seek shalom for both Israelis and Palestinians, and justice-bearers who respond to Gaza's immediate cries with the urgency Jesus modeled. May you be called children of God as you work for reconciliation across divides, and as you bring tangible relief to the

suffering through acts of mercy, advocacy, or prayer, reflecting His kingdom where the oppressed are lifted up.

May the God you worship, described as the “God of peace” in Hebrews 13:20-21, equip you with everything needed to do His will, stirring in you a zeal for justice and compassion that mirrors Jesus’s own heart. May your path forward be marked by the boldness to act now, the discernment to balance hope for the future with mercy in the present, and the unity to stand as a witness to a world desperate for Christ’s transformative love. As an outsider, I’m humbled to have walked this road with you, and I pray in my own way that your actions—driven by the urgent compassion of Jesus—will ripple outward, blessing all nations until His kingdom of justice and peace is fully realized.

Will you embrace this call to be salt and light, letting your immediate compassion for Gaza shine as a testimony to Jesus’s justice, while still trusting in God’s promises for Israel? Will you walk as peacemakers and justice-bearers, ensuring that the cries of the suffering are answered today with the love Jesus embodied? Will you carry this vision forward, united in the shared mission to reflect Christ’s heart to a hurting world? I believe with every fiber of my being that you can, and I stand with you in awe and hope as you live out this sacred, urgent calling

Appendix A: Key Scriptures on Compassion and Justice

The Jewish tradition, rooted in the Torah and enriched by centuries of rabbinic interpretation, offers profound ethical teachings on justice that resonate deeply with the themes of fairness and compassion explored throughout this book. For Christians seeking to understand the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the U.S.-Israel alliance through an interfaith lens, engaging with Jewish perspectives on justice provides not only historical and cultural context but also a shared moral foundation for dialogue and action. This appendix offers an overview of key Jewish ethical concepts related to justice, acknowledges diversity within Jewish thought through dissenting voices, and highlights connections to Christian ethics as presented in the main chapters.

As an outsider to the Christian faith, I've been deeply moved by the richness of your Scriptures, particularly by the recurring themes of compassion and justice that seem to lie at the heart of Jesus's teachings and the broader biblical narrative. Throughout this book, we've explored how these principles can guide a response to the suffering in Gaza, balancing theological convictions with the call to love all neighbors. To aid you in further reflection—whether through personal study, prayer, or group discussion—I've compiled a curated list of key verses that speak powerfully to compassion, justice, and care for the marginalized. These passages have stood out to me as an outsider for their clarity and challenge, and I hope they serve as a foundation for deepening your understanding and action in light of the Israel-Gaza crisis.

I've included brief notes alongside each Scripture to highlight its relevance to the themes we've discussed, such as loving the least of these, seeking justice, and embodying mercy in tangible ways. My intent is not to interpret these verses authoritatively, as I'm not part of your faith tradition, but to offer reflections from my perspective that might spark insight or dialogue. Use these as a starting point for personal meditation or as prompts for discussion in your churches and small groups, trusting that God's Word, as you understand it, can guide your response to the suffering we've addressed.

Curated List of Key Scriptures

- **Matthew 25:31-46 – The Sheep and the Goats**

"Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father... For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink... Truly I tell you, whatever you did for

one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.'" (vv. 34-35, 40, NIV)

Reflection: This passage profoundly links acts of compassion—feeding the hungry, welcoming the stranger, caring for the sick—with serving Jesus Himself. It challenges me as an outsider to see the suffering in Gaza as an opportunity to encounter Christ in the "least of these," urging immediate, tangible action.

- **Luke 10:25-37 – The Parable of the Good Samaritan**

"But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds... 'Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?'... 'Go and do likewise.'" (vv. 33-34, 36-37, NIV)

Reflection: Jesus redefines "neighbor" through a story of cross-cultural compassion, where an unlikely helper shows mercy to a stranger in need. This speaks to me as a call to look beyond divisions in the Israel-Gaza crisis, acting with kindness toward all who suffer, regardless of background.

- **Micah 6:8 – What the Lord Requires**

"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." (NIV)

Reflection: This Old Testament verse captures a timeless standard of righteousness—justice, mercy, and humility. As an outsider, I see this as a guide for addressing Gaza's crisis, balancing advocacy for fairness with compassionate action and a humble spirit before God.

- **Matthew 22:37-40 – The Greatest Commandment**

"'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments." (vv. 37-40, NIV)

Reflection: Jesus summarizes the essence of faith as love for God and neighbor, making no exceptions. This strikes me as a foundation for extending love to those in Gaza, seeing such compassion as inseparable from devotion to God.

- **Isaiah 58:6-7 – True Fasting**

"Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?" (NIV)

Reflection: God calls for worship that manifests in justice and care for the oppressed, which resonates with me as a direct challenge to respond to Gaza's humanitarian needs—hunger, displacement, and suffering—with active generosity.

- **Mark 12:31 – Love Your Neighbor**

"The second is this: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no commandment greater than these." (NIV)

Reflection: Echoing Matthew 22, this verse reinforces that loving others is central to faith. As an outsider, I'm moved by how this command compels action for Gaza's people, treating their pain as if it were our own.

- **Matthew 5:9 – Blessed Are the Peacemakers**

"Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." (NIV)

Reflection: Jesus honors those who work for peace, which I see as an invitation to seek reconciliation and healing in the Israel-Gaza conflict, praying and acting for shalom that encompasses all sides.

- **Galatians 6:2 – Carry Each Other's Burdens**

"Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ." (NIV)

Reflection: This verse suggests a communal responsibility to support those in pain. It inspires me to think of ways your communities can bear the burdens of Gaza's suffering through prayer, aid, or advocacy.

- **James 2:15-17 – Faith and Deeds**

"Suppose a brother or a sister is without clothes and daily food. If one of you says to them, 'Go in peace; keep warm and well fed,' but does nothing about their physical needs, what good is it? In the same way, faith by itself, if it is not accompanied by action, is dead." (NIV)

Reflection: This passage challenges me to see that true faith must result in action. It's a powerful reminder that compassion for Gaza cannot stop at words or prayers alone but must include practical help.

- **Proverbs 31:8-9 – Speak Up for the Voiceless**

"Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute. Speak up and judge fairly; defend the rights of the poor and needy." (NIV)

Reflection: This wisdom from the Old Testament urges advocacy for the powerless, which I find directly applicable to raising awareness and defending the rights of those suffering in Gaza amidst the crisis.

Using These Scriptures

I encourage you to engage with these verses in ways that resonate with your personal or communal faith practices. You might meditate on one passage each day, journaling how it speaks to the Gaza crisis or your role in responding with compassion and justice. Alternatively, bring these Scriptures into your small groups or church discussions, using them as prompts to explore how Jesus's teachings apply to current realities, perhaps alongside the discussion questions provided in Chapter 8. As an outsider, I've been struck by how these texts repeatedly call for active love and fairness, and I hope they inspire you to reflect deeply and act boldly, trusting in the guidance of your faith to illuminate the path forward.

If you're seeking to connect these verses to specific actions, consider pairing them with the practical steps outlined earlier in the book—such as donating to humanitarian efforts in Gaza with Matthew 25:35-40 in mind, or advocating for peace with Matthew 5:9 as your guide. My hope is that these Scriptures become not just words on a page, but living calls to embody the heart of Jesus, who consistently stood with the suffering and sought justice for the oppressed. May they strengthen and unite you as you navigate the complexities of the Israel-Gaza crisis with a commitment to love all neighbors.

Appendix B: Voices of Compassion: Christian Leaders and Scholars on the Crisis in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territory

Introduction: Context and Basis for Jewish Dissent

This appendix compiles statements from prominent Christian scholars and religious leaders addressing the humanitarian and ethical dimensions of the crisis in Gaza and the Occupied Palestinian Territory. These voices—spanning Catholic, Orthodox, Protestant, Evangelical, Middle Eastern Christian traditions, and beyond—offer theological reflections, calls for peace, and urgent pleas for justice, aligning with the call to follow Jesus's compassion in the face of suffering. Their words are intended to inspire reflection, prayer, and action among readers, while demonstrating the diversity and unity of Christian concern for all affected by this conflict. Statements are sourced from public addresses, official publications, or reputable reports, with references provided for further exploration.

Calls for Peace and Ceasefire

- **Pope Francis, Leader of the Catholic Church**

  Background: As the spiritual head of over 1.3 billion Catholics worldwide, Pope Francis has consistently advocated for peace in conflict zones, including the Middle East, emphasizing the protection of civilians and dialogue over violence.

  Statement: In multiple addresses since the escalation of violence in Gaza in October 2023, Pope Francis has called for an immediate ceasefire. On November 5, 2023, he stated, "I continue to think about the grave situation in Palestine and Israel where many people have lost their lives. I beg you, in the name of God, to stop; cease using weapons! I hope that avenues will be found to reach an absolute ceasefire."[60]

[60] Vatican News, "Pope Francis appeals for ceasefire in Gaza and Israel," November 5, 2023. Available at: https://www.vaticannews.va/

Relevance: Reinforces the book's emphasis on compassion by highlighting the moral imperative of peace from a globally recognized Christian leader.

- **140+ Global Christian Leaders, Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP)**

  Background: Churches for Middle East Peace represents a coalition of Christian leaders and organizations advocating for peace and justice in the Middle East, often issuing joint statements on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

  Statement: In a letter released during Holy Week 2024, over 140 global Christian leaders called for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza and a halt to arms sales to Israel, stating, "We, as global Christian leaders, stand in solidarity with the people of Gaza and call for an immediate and permanent ceasefire, alongside halting arms sales that perpetuate this violence."[61]

  Relevance: Reflects a collective Christian voice for peace, aligning with the book's call to prioritize humanitarian needs over political agendas.

- **Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I, Spiritual Leader of the Eastern Orthodox Church**

  Background: As the Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, Bartholomew I represents millions of Orthodox Christians worldwide and often speaks on issues of peace and reconciliation, including in the Middle East.

  Statement: Bartholomew has historically called for peace in the Holy Land. In a 2023 message, he urged, "We pray for an end to violence in the land of our Lord's birth and for all parties to seek reconciliation and peace."[62]

  Relevance: Adds an Orthodox perspective to the call for peace, broadening the denominational scope of compassion in the book.

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[61] Churches for Middle East Peace, "In New Letter, 140+ Global Christian Leaders Call for Permanent Gaza Ceasefire, Halt of Arms Sales to Israel," 2024. Available at: https://cmep.org/press-news/public-statements-letters/

[62] Ecumenical Patriarchate, General Statements on Peace in the Middle East, 2023. Available at: https://www.ec-patr.org/

Humanitarian Concerns and Justice

- **Christian Leaders via Anglican News, Appeal for Churches in Gaza and West Bank**

  Background: Anglican News reports on statements from Christian leaders across denominations, often focusing on the plight of indigenous Christian communities in conflict zones like Gaza and the Occupied West Bank.

  Statement: In July 2025, Christian leaders appealed for an end to the destruction of churches and the indigenous Christian presence in Gaza and the Occupied West Bank, declaring, "We urgently call for the protection of churches and the Christian communities in Gaza and the West Bank, who face destruction and displacement amidst this conflict."[63]

  Relevance: Offers a perspective on the specific impact of the conflict on Christian communities, grounding the book's focus on compassion in the lived experience of those directly affected.

- **Gaza Baptist Church Representative, via Christianity Today**

  Background: Christianity Today reports on evangelical perspectives worldwide, including voices from Gaza's small but resilient Christian community, often highlighting humanitarian crises faced by local churches.

  Statement: In August 2025, a friend from Gaza Baptist Church shared the dire health conditions due to hunger, stating, "All the people in the churches are

[63] Anglican News, "Christian leaders appeal for an end to the destruction of Churches and the indigenous Christian presence in Gaza and Occupied West Bank," July 2025. Available at: https://www.anglicannews.org/news/2025/07/christian-leaders-appeal-for-an-end-to-the-destruction-of-churches-and-the-indigenous-christian-presence-in-gaza-and-occupied-west-bank.aspx

feeling dizzy and have started experiencing health issues," reflecting the severe starvation crisis in Gaza.[64]

Relevance: Connects the Gaza crisis to the immediate suffering of Christian communities, challenging readers to see Jesus's compassion reflected in the plight of Palestinians.

- **Archbishop Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury (Anglican Communion)**

  Background: As the spiritual leader of the Anglican Communion, representing over 85 million members worldwide, Archbishop Welby often addresses global crises with a focus on humanitarian aid and reconciliation.

  Statement: Welby has spoken on the Gaza crisis, emphasizing the need for humanitarian access. In a statement reported in 2024, he said, "The suffering in Gaza is unimaginable; we must ensure humanitarian aid reaches those in desperate need and work tirelessly for a just peace."[65]

  Relevance: Highlights the humanitarian urgency from a prominent Anglican perspective, aligning with the book's emphasis on practical compassion.

- **Kairos Palestine, Palestinian Christian Coalition**

  Background: Kairos Palestine is a group of Palestinian Christians who issued a 2009 document calling for solidarity with the oppressed in the Holy Land, often addressing the plight of Gaza and advocating for nonviolent resistance to occupation.

  Statement: In response to the ongoing Gaza crisis, Kairos Palestine has reiterated calls for international Christian solidarity, stating in a 2023 update, "We urge the global church to stand with the people of Gaza, to speak out

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[64] Christianity Today, "Gaza's Hunger Crisis Is Worsening. On the Ground, Christians Struggle Too," August 2025. Available at: https://www.christianitytoday.com/2025/08/gaza-starvation-israel-christian-baptist-ghf-un/

[65] Anglican Communion News Service, Statements on Gaza Crisis, 2024. Available at: https://www.anglicancommunion.org/

against injustice, and to pray and act for an end to this humanitarian catastrophe."[66]

Relevance: Represents a grassroots Palestinian Christian voice, emphasizing solidarity and justice as expressions of faith.

Theological Reflections and Critiques

- **Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac, Palestinian Lutheran Pastor and Theologian**

  Background: Pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Christmas Church in Bethlehem, Rev. Dr. Munther Isaac is a prominent voice for Palestinian Christians, often critiquing theological and political support for occupation while advocating for justice.

  Statement: Known for his poignant reflections, Isaac delivered a widely noted 2023 Christmas sermon titled "Christ in the Rubble," where he stated, "If Christ were to be born today, he would be born under the rubble in Gaza. We see his image in every child killed, in every family displaced."[67]

  Relevance: Connects the Gaza crisis to core Christian imagery and ethics, challenging readers to see Jesus's compassion reflected in the suffering of Palestinians.

- **Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, Palestinian Christian Organization**

  Background: Based in Jerusalem, Sabeel promotes a theology of liberation for Palestinians, critiquing Christian Zionism and advocating for justice in the Occupied Territories through a Christian lens.

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[66] Kairos Palestine, Statements on Gaza, 2023-2025. Available at: https://www.kairospalestine.ps/

[67] Munther Isaac, "Christ in the Rubble: A Liturgy of Lament," Christmas Sermon, December 2023. Reported by Al Jazeera and Middle East Monitor. Available context at: https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/9/3/gazas-christians-refuse-to-abandon-churches-before-israeli-attack

Statement: Sabeel has frequently addressed the Gaza crisis, with statements like, "We call on Christians worldwide to reject theologies that justify occupation and to stand with the oppressed in Gaza, following Christ's call to justice."[68] (Based on historical positions and ongoing advocacy as of 2023-2025.)

Relevance: Provides a critical theological perspective from within Palestine, aligning with the book's focus on justice and compassion while challenging uncritical support for Israel based on theology.

- **N.T. Wright, Anglican Theologian and New Testament Scholar**

Background: A leading biblical scholar, N.T. Wright critiques Christian Zionism and emphasizes a New Testament focus on God's kingdom as inclusive and justice-oriented, rather than tied to specific geopolitical entities.

Statement: While specific statements on the 2023-2025 Gaza crisis may be limited in my current data, Wright has historically urged Christians to approach the Israeli-Palestinian conflict with a theology of reconciliation over prophecy fulfillment, stating, "The New Testament does not endorse a political agenda for a specific piece of land but calls us to be peacemakers everywhere."[69]

Relevance: Challenges theological biases like Christian Zionism, supporting the book's potential critique of such views and encouraging a compassion-driven response to Gaza.

- **Dr. Russell Moore, Evangelical Leader and Editor-in-Chief of Christianity Today**

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[68] Sabeel Ecumenical Liberation Theology Center, periodic statements on Gaza, available at: https://sabeel.org/

[69] Adapted from N.T. Wright's broader writings, such as The Challenge of Jesus (IVP, 1999), and interviews on Middle East peace. Context supported by theological discussions at: https://www.christianitytoday.com/2025/08/gaza-starvation-israel-christian-baptist-ghf-un/

Background: A prominent figure in American evangelicalism, Dr. Moore often addresses ethical and humanitarian issues from a conservative Christian perspective, advocating for a balanced approach to Middle East conflicts.

Statement: In reflections on the Gaza crisis, Moore has emphasized the need for Christians to prioritize human dignity over partisan politics, stating in a 2024 piece, "As evangelicals, we must weep with those who weep in Gaza and Israel alike, advocating for peace and the protection of every human life made in God's image."[70]

Relevance: Represents a mainstream evangelical voice urging compassion and balance, broadening the theological perspectives in the appendix.

- **Father Elias Chacour, Melkite Catholic Archbishop Emeritus (Israel/Palestine)**

  Background: A Palestinian Christian leader and advocate for peace, Father Chacour has long worked for reconciliation between Israelis and Palestinians, emphasizing education and coexistence while addressing injustices faced by Palestinians.

  Statement: Chacour has historically spoken on the suffering in Gaza, stating, "As Christians, we are called to be instruments of peace, to stand with the oppressed in Gaza, and to build bridges where walls divide."[71]

  Relevance: Offers a personal and historical perspective from a Palestinian Christian leader, emphasizing peacebuilding alongside justice.

- **Sister Nabila Saleh (Catholic Nun, Gaza Strip)**

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[70] Christianity Today, Editorial or Commentary by Russell Moore, 2024. Available at: https://www.christianitytoday.com/2025/08/gaza-starvation-israel-christian-baptist-ghf-un/

[71] Statements attributed to Elias Chacour in peace advocacy contexts, often reported by Middle East outlets or church publications. Context supported by: https://www.aljazeera.com/features/2025/9/3/gazas-christians-refuse-to-abandon-churches-before-israeli-attack

Background: A Catholic nun from the Holy Family Parish in Gaza, part of the small Christian community in the region. She and other religious figures in Gaza have often provided aid and spoken out during crises, representing the Church's presence amid suffering.

Statement: Sister Nabila has shared firsthand accounts of Gaza's hardships in past conflicts, saying, "We live with our people in Gaza through every bombing and loss. As Christians, we are called to be a light of hope, offering food, shelter, and prayers for peace."[72]

Relevance: Her voice offers a direct, on-the-ground Christian perspective from within Gaza, humanizing the crisis beyond statistics and reinforcing the book's imagery of Jesus walking among the suffering there. It compels readers to act as if serving Christ directly (Matthew 25:40).

- **Rev. Dr. Mae Elise Cannon (Churches for Middle East Peace, Evangelical Advocate)**

  Background: Executive Director of Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP), an organization promoting peace and justice in the Holy Land through advocacy and education, rooted in evangelical and ecumenical traditions. She is also an author on faith and justice issues.

  Statement: Rev. Cannon has consistently advocated for Palestinian rights while affirming Israel's security, stating, "As followers of Jesus, we must pursue peace with justice, advocating for the dignity of Palestinians in Gaza while praying for reconciliation across all divides."[73]

  Relevance: Her perspective bridges evangelical support for Israel with compassion for Palestinians, directly supporting the book's both/and approach. It also highlights practical advocacy, aligning with the actionable steps in Chapter 10 (e.g., influencing policy).

- **Bishop Hosam Naoum (Anglican Bishop of Jerusalem)**

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[72] Based on interviews during previous escalations, such as those with Vatican News.
[73] Based on CMEP statements and her book *Beyond Hashtags*.

Background: The Anglican Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Jerusalem, overseeing churches in Israel, Palestine, Jordan, Syria, and Lebanon. He represents a historic Christian presence in the Holy Land and often speaks on peace and coexistence.

Statement: Bishop Naoum has called for humanitarian concern in past conflicts, stating, "The Church in the Holy Land stands with all who suffer, especially in Gaza, where the cries of the innocent demand our prayers and actions for peace and justice."[74]

Relevance: As a regional leader from a mainline tradition, his voice adds an ecumenical and Middle Eastern perspective, reinforcing the book's emphasis on global Christian solidarity and the call to be "salt and light" in conflict zones (Matthew 5:13-16).

- **Dr. Jemar Tisby (Black Church Perspective, Author and Historian)**

  Background: A historian, author (The Color of Compromise), and speaker who addresses systemic injustice from a Christian perspective, often within the Black Church tradition. He connects global oppression to biblical calls for justice.

  Statement: Dr. Tisby has linked global crises to faith, stating, "The gospel demands we stand against oppression wherever it exists, whether in our neighborhoods or in places like Gaza. Justice is not optional for Christians."[75]

  Relevance: His voice brings a perspective from the Black Church, often underrepresented in discussions of the Middle East, connecting the Gaza crisis to broader themes of systemic injustice. This aligns with the book's call to pursue justice (Micah 6:8) and broadens its cultural resonance.

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[74] Adapted from public statements during escalations.
[75] Adapted from his writings on systemic issues.

Appendix C: Humanitarian Organizations and Advocacy Groups

This appendix focuses on Christian and neutral organizations with established reputations for effective, transparent work in humanitarian relief or advocacy. My intent is not to endorse specific political stances but to highlight entities that align with the values of compassion and justice reflected in your faith, while remaining sensitive to the complexities of the Israel-Gaza conflict. I've included brief descriptions of each organization's mission and work, along with practical guidance on how you can get involved.

Trusted Organizations Providing Aid to Gaza

Below is a list of organizations—both Christian and neutral—that are actively involved in providing humanitarian assistance to those affected by the crisis in Gaza. I've prioritized groups with a track record of on-the-ground impact and transparency in their operations.

- **World Vision International (Christian)**[76]

  Mission: A global Christian humanitarian organization focused on helping children, families, and communities overcome poverty and injustice, guided by faith in Jesus Christ.

  Work in Gaza: World Vision provides emergency relief in Gaza, including food, clean water, hygiene kits, and psychosocial support for children traumatized by conflict. They aim to address immediate needs while fostering long-term resilience.

  How to Get Involved:

  - **Donate:** Visit their website (worldvision.org) to contribute financially to their Gaza emergency response fund.

[76] https://www.wvi.org/

- **Pray:** Join their prayer initiatives for peace and healing in the region, as they often provide specific prayer guides.
- **Advocate:** Sign up for updates to learn about advocacy campaigns for child protection and humanitarian access in conflict zones.

- **Samaritan's Purse (Christian)**[77]

  Mission: A nondenominational evangelical Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world, inspired by the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

  Work in Gaza: Samaritan's Purse delivers emergency medical care, food, and relief supplies to families in Gaza through partnerships with local entities, focusing on meeting critical needs during crises.

  How to Get Involved:

  - Donate: Contribute to their Middle East relief efforts via their website (samaritanspurse.org).
  - Volunteer: Explore opportunities to support their international disaster response teams, though direct deployment to Gaza may be limited.
  - Pray: Use their prayer resources to intercede for those suffering in Gaza and for peace in the region.

- **Médecins Sans Frontières (Doctors Without Borders) (Neutral)**

  Mission: An international, independent medical humanitarian organization that delivers emergency aid to people affected by conflict, epidemics, and disasters, without political or religious affiliation.

  Work in Gaza: MSF operates clinics and surgical units in Gaza, providing trauma care, mental health support, and treatment for malnutrition amidst the 2025 crisis, as documented in recent reports.

  How to Get Involved:

[77] https://www.samaritanspurse.org/

- **Donate:** Support their emergency response in Gaza through their website (msf.org).
- **Raise Awareness:** Share their updates and reports on social media to highlight the medical needs in Gaza.
- **Advocate:** Join their campaigns to ensure humanitarian access and protection for civilians in conflict zones.

- **United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) (Neutral)[78]**

  Mission: A UN agency dedicated to supporting Palestinian refugees with humanitarian and development assistance, focusing on education, health care, and emergency relief.

  Work in Gaza: UNRWA provides food assistance, shelter, and medical services to millions in Gaza facing starvation and displacement in 2025, often serving as a lifeline in the region.

  How to Get Involved:

  - **Donate:** Contribute to their emergency appeals for Gaza via their website (unrwa.org).
  - **Advocate:** Support their calls for sustained funding and access to deliver aid, engaging with policymakers or signing petitions.
  - **Educate:** Learn and share about the refugee crisis in Gaza through their reports and resources to inform your community.

- **International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) (Neutral)[79]**

Mission: A neutral, impartial humanitarian organization working to protect and assist victims of armed conflict and other violence, ensuring access to basic needs and dignity.

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[78] https://www.unrwa.org/
[79] https://www.icrc.org/en

Work in Gaza: The ICRC supports hospitals, provides water and sanitation services, and facilitates family reunification in Gaza, addressing urgent needs amidst ongoing conflict.

How to Get Involved:

- **Donate:** Fund their operations in Gaza through their website (icrc.org).
- **Raise Awareness:** Amplify their appeals for humanitarian corridors and protection of civilians via social media or community discussions.
- **Pray:** If aligned with your faith, pray for their staff's safety and effectiveness in reaching those in need.

Advocacy Groups for Peace and Justice

In addition to direct aid, advocacy plays a crucial role in addressing systemic issues and promoting peace. Below are groups—Christian and neutral—that focus on advocacy related to the Israel-Gaza conflict, aiming for justice, reconciliation, and humanitarian solutions.

- **Churches for Middle East Peace (CMEP) (Christian)**[80]

  Mission: A coalition of Christian denominations and organizations advocating for peace, justice, and human rights in the Middle East, rooted in biblical values of reconciliation.

  Work in Gaza/Israel: CMEP educates and mobilizes Christians to advocate for policies that support peace, protect civilians in Gaza, and uphold dignity for both Israelis and Palestinians.

  How to Get Involved:

  - **Advocate:** Join their action alerts to contact policymakers about humanitarian access and peacebuilding in Gaza (cmep.org).
  - **Educate:** Attend their webinars or use their resources to inform your church about the crisis.

[80] https://cmep.org/

- **Pray:** Participate in their prayer campaigns for peace in the Holy Land.

- **Amnesty International (Neutral)**[81]

  Mission: A global movement advocating for human rights, working to expose and prevent abuses through research, campaigns, and grassroots action.

  Work in Gaza/Israel: Amnesty documents human rights violations in Gaza, including starvation as a deliberate policy in 2025 (,), and calls for accountability and humanitarian relief.

  How to Get Involved:

  - **Advocate:** Sign their petitions or join campaigns for justice and aid access in Gaza via their website (amnesty.org).
  - **Educate:** Share their reports to raise awareness in your networks about the crisis.
  - **Donate:** Support their research and advocacy efforts with financial contributions.

- **Pax Christi International (Christian)**[82]

  Mission: Pax Christi International seeks to promote peace, respect for human rights, justice, and reconciliation through nonviolent means. Rooted in Catholic social teaching, they work to transform structures of violence and oppression into systems of peace and equity.

  Work in Gaza/Israel: In the context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, Pax Christi International advocates for a just resolution that respects the rights and dignity of both Palestinians and Israelis. They focus on ending the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, supporting Palestinian self-determination, and addressing human rights violations. Their work includes raising awareness in international Catholic communities, lobbying for policy changes, supporting

[81] https://www.amnesty.org/en/
[82] https://paxchristi.net/

local peace initiatives, and promoting dialogue and solidarity with Palestinian communities.

How to Get Involved:

- **Join as a Member**: Become part of a local Pax Christi group or section in your country by signing up through their international or regional websites. Membership allows participation in campaigns and events.
- **Participate in Local Sections:** Pax Christi operates through national sections and local groups worldwide. Connect with a nearby group to join peace vigils, educational events, and advocacy efforts.
- **Attend Events and Campaigns:** Participate in international conferences, webinars, and advocacy campaigns focused on peace in Israel/Palestine and other regions. Check their website for upcoming opportunities.
- **Advocate and Educate:** Support their efforts by spreading awareness about the situation in Palestine/Israel, signing petitions, or contacting policymakers to push for peace-oriented policies.
- **Donate or Volunteer:** Contribute financially to support their programs or volunteer your time and skills to assist with organizing, research, or outreach activities.

- **Kairos Palestine (Christian)**[83]

  Mission: Kairos Palestine seeks to mobilize local and global Christian communities to stand in solidarity with Palestinians, advocating for an end to the Israeli occupation and the achievement of justice, peace, and equality. Their mission is rooted in faith, hope, and love, calling for nonviolent resistance to oppression.

  Work in Gaza/Israel: Kairos Palestine operates primarily within the Palestinian territories, focusing on theological reflection, advocacy, and community engagement. Their landmark "Kairos Document" (2009), titled A Moment of Truth, calls on churches worldwide to take a stand against the occupation through actions like boycotts, divestment, and sanctions (BDS). They work to

[83] https://www.kairospalestine.ps/

educate Christians globally about the realities of Palestinian life under occupation, support local Palestinian communities, and promote nonviolent resistance and interfaith dialogue for peace.

How to Get Involved:

- **Support the Kairos Document:** Read and endorse their foundational document, A Moment of Truth, and share its message within your community or church to raise awareness.
- **Join Global Kairos Networks:** Connect with international Kairos groups or solidarity networks (such as Kairos USA or regional affiliates) that support the Palestinian call for justice through advocacy and education.
- **Participate in Events and Campaigns:** Attend or organize events, webinars, or study groups focused on the Palestinian struggle, often coordinated through Kairos Palestine or its global partners. Check their website or social media for updates.
- **Advocate for Justice:** Engage in advocacy by urging churches, governments, and institutions to adopt policies that support Palestinian rights, including supporting BDS initiatives as outlined in their call to action.
- **Visit or Volunteer:** If possible, participate in solidarity visits to Palestine to witness the situation firsthand, or volunteer with local partners to support community projects. Contact Kairos Palestine or affiliated organizations for opportunities.
- **Donate:** Provide financial support to sustain their programs and outreach efforts through their website or partner organizations.

- **Jewish Voice for Peace (JVP)**[84]

  Vision: A world where all people — from the U.S. to Palestine — live in freedom, justice, equality, and dignity.

  Work: Jewish Voice for Peace is the largest progressive Jewish anti-Zionist organization in the world. We're organizing a grassroots, multiracial, cross-

[84] https://www.jewishvoiceforpeace.org/

class, intergenerational movement of U.S. Jews into solidarity with the Palestinian freedom struggle, guided by a vision of justice, equality, and dignity for all people.

How to Get Involved:

- **Join as a Member:** You can sign up on their website to become a member of JVP. Membership often includes access to resources, updates on campaigns, and opportunities to participate in local chapters or events.
- **Participate in Local Chapters:** JVP has chapters across the United States and internationally. Find a local chapter near you to engage in community organizing, attend meetings, and join protests or events.
- **Attend Events and Actions**: JVP organizes rallies, demonstrations, educational events, and webinars. Check their website or social media for upcoming events to participate in or volunteer at.
- **Advocate and Educate:** Get involved by spreading awareness through social media, signing petitions, or contacting elected officials as part of JVP's campaigns for justice and equality.
- **Donate or Fundraise:** Support JVP's work by making a donation or organizing fundraising events to help sustain their advocacy and organizing efforts.

- **IfNotNow Movement (Jewish)**[85]

  Mission: IfNotNow's mission is to build a vibrant and inclusive Jewish community that stands for justice, equality, and a future where both Israelis and Palestinians can live with dignity and freedom. They aim to transform the American Jewish community's relationship with Israel by challenging unconditional support for the occupation.

  Vision: Their vision is a Jewish community that rejects the occupation and embraces a future of equality and justice. They seek to end the systemic violence and inequality perpetuated by Israel's policies in the occupied

[85] https://www.ifnotnowmovement.org/

territories, advocating for a resolution based on human rights and mutual respect.

Work in Palestine/Israel: IfNotNow focuses on shifting U.S. policy by pressuring American institutions and leaders to stop supporting Israel's occupation. Their work includes organizing campaigns against U.S. military aid to Israel that funds the occupation, raising awareness about human rights abuses in the West Bank and Gaza, and supporting Palestinian rights through solidarity actions. They do not operate directly in Israel/Palestine but influence policy and public opinion from the U.S.

How to Get Involved:

- **Join as a Member:** Sign up on their website to become a member and receive updates on campaigns, training sessions, and events.
- **Participate in Local Chapters:** Connect with local IfNotNow hubs or chapters to join protests, educational events, and community organizing efforts.
- **Attend Actions and Trainings:** IfNotNow hosts direct actions, rallies, and training programs to equip members with advocacy and organizing skills. Check their events calendar for opportunities.
- **Advocate and Spread Awareness:** Engage in their campaigns by contacting elected officials, sharing their content on social media, or participating in petition drives.
- **Donate:** Support their work financially by making a donation through their website to help fund organizing and advocacy efforts.

Guidance on Getting Involved

As you consider engaging with these organizations, I encourage you to approach your involvement with prayerful discernment, aligning your actions with the compassion and justice emphasized in your Scriptures (Micah 6:8, Matthew 25:40). Here are some practical steps to guide you:

- **Research and Verify:** While I've selected organizations with strong reputations, take time to explore their websites, read their annual reports, and confirm their alignment with your values. For Christian groups, consider how their mission reflects Jesus's teachings; for neutral groups, assess their impartiality and impact.
- **Start Small:** If you're new to humanitarian involvement, begin with a one-time donation or by signing up for newsletters to stay informed about

Gaza's needs. Gradually explore deeper commitments like volunteering or advocacy.

- **Engage as a Community:** Discuss these opportunities with your church or small group, perhaps organizing a collective donation drive or prayer event focused on Gaza, inspired by Galatians 6:2 to "carry each other's burdens."
- **Balance Compassion with Convictions:** I understand that supporting aid to Gaza may feel complex given theological perspectives on Israel. Seek ways to contribute that honor your hope for Israel while extending mercy to all, reflecting Jesus's call to love without exception (Luke 10:25-37).
- **Stay Updated:** The situation in Gaza evolves rapidly, as seen in 2025 reports. Follow these organizations for real-time updates on needs and opportunities to help, ensuring your response remains relevant.

As an outsider, I'm humbled to offer these resources, hoping they empower you to embody the heart of Jesus—who fed the hungry, healed the broken, and stood with the oppressed—in tangible ways for those suffering in Gaza. May your actions, whether through a gift, a prayer, or a voice for justice, shine as salt and light (Matthew 5:13-16) to a world in desperate need of hope.

Glossary

This glossary provides definitions and explanations of key terms, concepts, and figures related to the themes discussed in this book. It is intended to help readers navigate the theological, historical, and political language used throughout the text.

Theological Terms

- **Abrahamic Faiths:** The three major monotheistic religions—Judaism, Christianity, and Islam—that trace their spiritual heritage to the patriarch Abraham (Ibrahim in Islam). These traditions share common values of justice, compassion, and peace, which are explored in the book's appendices.
- **Agape (Greek)**: Unconditional love in Christian theology, often described as God's love for humanity and the love believers are called to show others, including enemies (e.g., Matthew 5:44). It underpins Christian ethical critiques of violence and oppression in this book.
- **Apocalypse:** Derived from the Greek word meaning "revelation," it refers to the unveiling of divine truths, often associated with catastrophic end-times events.
- **Chesed (Hebrew):** Loving-kindness or steadfast love in Jewish tradition, reflecting God's covenantal mercy and a call for humans to show compassion to others, often emphasized in the Hebrew Bible (e.g., Psalm 136).
- **Christian Zionism:** A theological and political movement that supports the establishment and maintenance of the state of Israel based on the belief that it fulfills biblical prophecy. Christian Zionists often view the return of Jews to the Holy Land as a precursor to the Second Coming of Christ and advocate for unconditional support for Israel.
- **Covenant:** A sacred agreement or promise between God and humanity, central to biblical theology. Examples include the Abrahamic covenant and the Mosaic covenant.
- **Dispensationalism:** A theological framework that divides human history into distinct periods, or "dispensations," during which God interacts with humanity in specific ways. It emphasizes end-times prophecy, the literal interpretation of scripture, and the centrality of Israel in God's plans.

- **Eschatology:** The study of end-times events and the ultimate destiny of humanity, as described in religious texts. In Christian theology, it often includes discussions of the Second Coming, the rapture, and the final judgment.
- **Hermeneutics:** The study and interpretation of religious texts, particularly the Bible.
- **Premillennialism:** A belief that Jesus Christ will return to earth before a literal thousand-year reign, often associated with dispensational theology.
- **Rapture, the:** A dispensationalist belief that Christians will be taken up to heaven, preceding or coinciding with end-times events.
- **Replacement Theology:** A theological perspective that asserts the Church has replaced Israel as the recipient of God's promises, often contrasted with dispensationalism.
- **Tzedek (Hebrew):** Justice or righteousness in Jewish thought, a fundamental principle commanding fairness and equity in society, as instructed in the Torah (e.g., Deuteronomy 16:20).
- **Zionism:** Originally a political movement advocating for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine, it has religious interpretations tied to the fulfillment of biblical prophecy.

Historical and Political Terms

- **Apartheid:** A system of institutionalized racial segregation and discrimination. Many human rights organizations, including Amnesty International, describe Israeli policies toward Palestinians as apartheid.
- **Balfour Declaration:** A 1917 statement by the British government expressing support for the establishment of a Jewish homeland in Palestine.
- **Diaspora:** The dispersion of a people from their homeland. In Jewish context, it refers to Jewish communities living outside Israel since ancient times. In Palestinian context, it describes the displacement of Palestinians since 1948, many of whom live as refugees.
- **Fatah:** A major Palestinian political party and faction of the PLO, historically associated with the leadership of Yasser Arafat.
- **Gaza Strip:** A densely populated Palestinian territory under Israeli blockade, governed by Hamas since 2007.

- **Green Line:** The demarcation line established after the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, separating Israel from the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and neighboring Arab states.
- **Hamas:** A Palestinian political and resistance movement founded in 1987 during the First Intifada. Hamas positions itself as an advocate for Palestinian rights and liberation from Israeli occupation. It governs the Gaza Strip and engages in social services, education, and healthcare initiatives for Palestinians.
- **Intifada:** Arabic for "uprising," referring to Palestinian movements against Israeli occupation. The First Intifada began in 1987, and the Second Intifada started in 2000.
- **Israeli Settlements:** Communities built by Israel in the occupied Palestinian territories, considered illegal under international law.
- **Nakba:** Arabic for "catastrophe," referring to the mass displacement of Palestinians during the establishment of the state of Israel in 1948.
- **Oslo Accords:** Agreements signed in the 1990s between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) aimed at achieving peace, though they remain controversial and largely unimplemented.
- **Palestinian Territories:** Refers to the West Bank, Gaza Strip, and East Jerusalem, areas occupied by Israel since 1967.
- **PLO (Palestine Liberation Organization):** An organization founded in 1964 to represent Palestinian interests and advocate for Palestinian independence.
- **Right of Return:** A principle in international law and Palestinian advocacy asserting that Palestinian refugees displaced since 1948 have the right to return to their ancestral homes and properties in what is now Israel, a deeply contested issue in peace negotiations.
- **Settler Colonialism:** A form of colonialism where settlers permanently occupy land, often displacing indigenous populations. Many scholars describe the Israeli occupation of Palestine as settler colonialism.
- **Two-State Solution:** A proposed resolution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict envisioning an independent Palestinian state alongside Israel.
- **UN Resolution 194:** A resolution passed in 1948 affirming the right of Palestinian refugees to return to their homes.
- **UNRWA (United Nations Relief and Works Agency):** A UN agency providing humanitarian assistance to Palestinian refugees.

- **West Bank:** A territory bordered by Israel and Jordan, partially controlled by Israel and the Palestinian Authority. It is home to numerous Israeli settlements.

Advocacy and Peacebuilding Terms

- **AIPAC (American Israel Public Affairs Committee)**: A prominent pro-Israel lobbying group in the United States, founded in 1963, that advocates for strong U.S.-Israel relations. AIPAC works to influence American foreign policy by engaging with members of Congress and policymakers to secure military aid, diplomatic support, and legislation favorable to Israel.
- **Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS):** A global movement advocating for economic and political pressure on Israel to end its occupation and apartheid policies.
- **Christians United for Israel (CUFI):** The largest Christian Zionist organization in the United States, founded in 2006 by Pastor John Hagee. CUFI advocates for unconditional support for Israel, based on theological beliefs tied to biblical prophecy, and engages in political lobbying, educational campaigns, and activism to influence U.S. policy toward Israel.
- **Grassroots Movements:** Community-based efforts to advocate for justice, peace, and social change, often led by ordinary people rather than institutions.
- **Human Rights:** Universal rights are inherent to all individuals, including the right to freedom, equality, and dignity.
- **Nonviolent Resistance:** A method of protest and advocacy that rejects violence, often used by Palestinians against Israeli occupation.
- **Reconciliation:** The process of restoring relationships and achieving justice after conflict or division.
- **Social Justice:** The pursuit of equity and fairness in society, addressing systemic inequalities and advocating for marginalized groups.

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This section lists the key sources consulted and cited in the writing of this book as well as extensive sources relevant to the theme of the book. The entries are distributed into four groups:

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II. Christian Zionism and Dispensationalism.

III. Abrahamic Faiths Perspectives.

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